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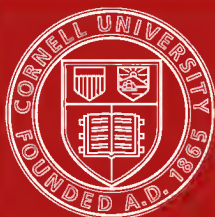
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THE LEGEND OF FAIR HELEN

THE LEGEND OF FAIR HELEN

AS TOLD BY HOMER, GOETHE,
AND OTHERS

A STUDY BY
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PRELUDE

‘ Bewundert viel und viel gescholten, Helena.’

GOETHE : *Faust*.

‘ A daughter of the Gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.’

TENNYSON : *A Dream of Fair Women*.

‘ Die ewig blühende Helena von Sparta.’

HEINE : *Elementargeister und Dämonen*.

‘ Fayre Helen, floure of beauty excellent.’

SPENSER : *Faërie Queene*, book iii., ch. 9.

‘ Her whom, we know well,
The world’s large spaces cannot parallel.’

SHAKESPEARE : *Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii.

‘ The fairest woman that the poet’s dream
Or artist hand has fashioned.’

SIR LEWIS MORRIS : *Epic of Hades*.

‘ Unendlich bedeutungsvoll ist die Erscheinung der
schönen Helena in der Sage vom Doctor Faust.’

HEINE : *Der Doktor Faust*.

‘ And from his lips broke forth a mighty cry of “Helen !
Helen ! Helen !”’

WILLIAM MORRIS : *The Death of Paris*.

‘ Death ends all tales, but this he endeth not.’

ANDREW LANG : *Helen of Troy*.

PROLOGUE

DEDICATED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH
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IN Goethe's *Helena*—which Heine called 'the most splendid statue that ever left the sculptor Goethe's studio'—the poet handles a treasury of old, partly contradictory fables, adding some of his own more modern fancies and thoughts. The magician may be said to play with the whole inventory, bringing before us the old as well as the new precious things in rapid and unexpected intermingling, and with a total disregard of time and place, but striking out from the combination new sparks of light and beauty in a phantasmagoria—that is his own expression—of infinite enjoyment for those of us who are not bound in pedantry or party spirit, who can free themselves from the fetters of the antique and from the new fetters of the modern so-called realism.

Does Goethe's second *Faust* allegorize his hero's excursion into the passion of the Renais-

sance for classical beauty? So the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th edition): ‘Goethe (*Faust*, Part II.) introduces Helena apparently to symbolize the Greek spirit acting on the modern mind.’ Is Goethe’s poem the intermingling of the classic poetry with that of the Middle Ages, of Achilles and King Arthur, of Helena and Brunhild, of Virgil and Tasso, of the Siege of Troy and the Crusades, of Homer and the spirit of the Minnesingers, whence the New Spirit is born, figured forth as Euphorion-Byron? Let it be this, but it is much more besides. No formula seems to exhaust the riches of Goethe’s words, the dignity and harmony of his verse,¹ the gallery of pictures he unrolls before our eyes, his praise of pathetic beauty.

People find symbolism and allegory in the poem. Carlyle calls it ‘fantastic and figurative; not an allegory, but a phantasmagory—properly speaking, a *Märchen*.’² ‘The whole piece has a dream-like character,’ he says elsewhere, ‘and in these cases no prudent soothsayer will be altogether confident.’³

¹ ‘In none of Goethe’s works are the marvellous beauty and finish of his style carried to a higher point’ (Sir Theodore Martin, preface to translation of *Faust*, ii., 1886).

² ‘Une féerie’ is the expression of the French critic Lichtenberger (*Faust de Goethe*, Paris, 1905).

³ *Essays*, vol. i., pp. 126-171.

Helen of Troy, then, is our subject—one of those beauties who stand out in history and legend eternally for both the admiration and the pity of mankind.¹

Listening to what I hope to have the pleasure of saying to you about fair Helen, and the various accounts of her, it will be for you to decide for yourselves whether she was a real person, typical of beauty, charm, failings, and sufferings, such as she appeared to generation after generation—a sister to Cleopatra, to Mary, Queen of Scots, perhaps to Marie Antoinette of France; or was she altogether a creation of fancy, or, again, a symbol or embodiment of the moon—a myth, and a mere phantom of beauty?

Let me not prejudge, but go with you through the charming and widespread maze, the fairy-tale of fortune and misfortune.

In so doing, I shall have to say many things which to a great number of my audience will be as well known as to me, or better. Let them

¹ 'Aber solche Zauberbilder sind verschieden von den Träumen, und nicht ohne einen verborgenen Grund realer Wahrheit' (Niebuhr, *Römische Geschichte*, 1811, i. 149).

And Andrew Lang, more especially on the Song of Roland: 'The theme rests on a remote historical fact, altered and magnified by legend' (*Homer and the Epic*, 1893, chap. 17).

show kindly patience at the repetition of their own knowledge for the sake of others, who may be less well at home in these regions.

One more introductory remark, to disarm the learned critics: I shall indiscriminately use the names of Zeus and Jupiter, of Aphrodite and Venus. Virgil will be with us, as well as Homer.

THE LEGEND OF FAIR HELEN

CHAPTER I

HOMER'S HELEN OF TROY

ONCE upon a time—do not most *Märchen* begin like that ?—the Earth came before the throne of Zeus to complain of men, and to ask to be rid of the human race.* He had given her as a dwelling-place to man. But the men had increased and multiplied, and were wrangling and oppressive, and generally unholy, and the Earth—full-bosomed Gaia¹—though she be a powerful woman, found them unbearable. In similar circumstances, the Divinity sent a cleansing flood, the Noachic one, that recorded by the Assyrians; and at another period, even in Greek mythology, that of which Deukalion and Pyrrha were the survivors. But on the present occasion Zeus bethought him of another

¹ Hesiod, *Theogony*, verse 117.

remedy. He created Nemesis, the spirit of revenge, in the second instance ; in the first, that of equity. It may have done some good to chasten men. Not enough. Then Zeus went a step farther. He created Helen. Nemesis and Helen together seemed enough to occupy men—Nemesis, by stirring up discord and retaliation ; Helen, indirectly, by her fatal beauty.¹

So we are told in the Cyprian verses²—an

¹ Helena was generated by Zeus with Nemesis—thus begins the summary of Proclus—Momos (or Prometheus, or Thesis), advises Zeus to create a beautiful daughter, through whom and the son of Thetis war arose between Hellenes and Barbarians, which would lighten the Earth, by taking many away from it. Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, vol. ii., 2 Aufl., pp. 85-88. He remarks that from the beginning Achilles and Helen are meant to be the two principal figures, finally writing : ‘ So stellte also das Epos den Achilleus und die Helena als Hauptpersonen gleich Anfang heraus, die es gegen Ende auch zusammenführt.’ However, Welcker mentions also Eris in the place of Nemesis, on the ground of a statement by a grammarian (pp. 86, 87). Cf. also *De Helena deâ*, by Th. Heicks, Sigmaringen, 1863. Other and more widely accepted legends represent Leda as the mother of Helena. A middle term is found by making her merely the nurse.

² Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, vol. i., pp. 279-290, refers the name to the island of Cyprus, where the cult of Aphrodite prevailed, whose action in the rape of Helen story is in the foreground. The Cyprians would naturally give a preference to such rhapsodes as sang the praises or

old poem which perhaps was as old as Homer, perhaps, or probably, older. Some of the Ancients ascribed it to him, and tell us that when he had a daughter to marry, and possessed in his old age no other riches, he gave the manuscript, instead of a dowry, to Stasinus¹ the Cyprian, his intending son-in-law, who was content with the bargain. Herodotus, the father of history—some ungraciously add, ‘and of lies’—who flourished about 450 B.C., still had the poem,² and did not believe it to be Homer’s. Aristotle, a century later,³ equally refers to these Cypriacs.⁴ Pausanias,⁵ again, who wrote his survey of Greek works of art between 160 and 180 A.D., certainly still knew the Cyprian verses. To us they are lost, save some fragments, which

legends of their island. To them the Cyprian verses were, so to speak, dedicated.

¹ *Ælian, Var. Histor.*, ix. 15. He mentions Pindar as already having referred to this story of the dowry. *Ælian* has several times obtained his material from the Cypria. In book x. 2. he refers to a poet Oroibantius, and to Dares of Phrygia, whose Phrygian Iliad is represented as older than Homer’s.

² Herodotus, ii. 117.

³ 384 to 322 B.C.

⁴ Bracketing them with the ‘Little Iliad’ (*Poetics*, part iii., *The Epic Poem*).

⁵ Pausanias, book x., chap. 26. He also knew the ‘Little Iliad’ and Lesches as well as the *Destruction of Troy*, by Stesichorus.

form part of a survey preserved by two Byzantine writers: Proclus,¹ in the fifth century A.D., and after him, in the ninth, Photius,² in his *Myriobiblon*, or *Bibliotheca*, excerpts from 280 Greek writers, most of whose works are lost. A modern French writer³ calls the Cyprian verses 'a program to Homer, but a program written after the performance.' It may be mentioned that these Cypriacs are reckoned one of a number which are called the Cyclic poems,⁴

¹ Born at Constantinople, 410; residing, very wealthy, at Alexandria and Athens, highly honoured, 485 (*vide* Victor Cousin, *Procli philosophi opera*, 1864). Whether what is published under his name (*Scriptores metrici graeci*, ed. Westphal., 1866) of excerpts from the Cyclics is really by him, or perhaps by a grammarian of the second century, is represented as doubtful (*Meyer's Encyclop.*, 5th ed., 1897, vol. xiv.). Observe, however, that Welcker speaks of him as 'the grammarian of the *second* century.'

² Died, after a very chequered life, in a monastery in Armenia, 891 (Th. Wright's *Dictionary-Cyclopædia*, 1862-1867).

³ Larousse.

⁴ On these Cyclics compare Professor Mahaffy's *Classical Greek Literature*, London, 1895, pp. 101-106. Here is a list of the Cyclics:

1. The Cypria, as above.
2. The Æthiopics, by Arctinus of Miletus.
3. The 'Little Iliad,' by the poet Lesches.
4. The Nostoi—the stories of the return of the besiegers.
5. The Telagonia.

complementing or continuing the work ascribed to Homer—poems which form, as it were, a circle round the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and may be contemporaneous, or older or younger than these. Although of these books but a few lines have descended to us, their contents, however modified by the later Greek poets, have in outline not been altogether lost, forming as they do the substructure of numerous tragedies. They also seem to have been known to a writer of the fourth century, Quintus Smyrnæus, of whom further on.

Other sources, too, of our information, or, rather, testimony to the belief in the legendary facts, exist in pictures on vases, and elsewhere, in bas-reliefs and statues¹—or credible reports on such, in later prose and verse writings. And, as usual in legendary lore, there are many variants, of which one is generally followed in

Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, vol. ii., p. 3, mentions thirteen great epic poems.

¹ F. G. Welcker, *Le Jugement de Paris*, 1846, gives a long descriptive catalogue of 68 vases, 6 wall-paintings, 17 bas-reliefs, also 22 medals, cut stones, and mirrors on that subject alone. He adds: 'Au milieu de cette richesse de figures que nous présentent les vases . . . il est bien étrange que ni dans Pline, ni nulle autre part, nous ne trouvions le jugement de Paris mentionné parmi les chefs d'œuvre d'aucun des plus célèbres artistes.'

preference, others not entirely discarded, but at times less readily remembered by the general public. The Edda legends, the Nibelungen, the Graal legends, the various accounts of the founding of Rome,¹ are striking instances. As to Helen, Homer has generally been followed by the Ancients and Moderns. Generally, not universally, as we shall see.

THETIS AND PELEUS.

The legend leads us on to the famous quarrel of the goddesses, whence spring many issues, among them the birth of the hero Achilles, whom it is well at once to recognise as the great male counterpart to Helena. Not that the poet fills up this parallel, or gives all the developments which the judgment of Paris afterwards brought about. But this is anticipating a little.

Once upon a time, Jupiter fell in love again—it was a way he had—with the goddess Thetis, one of the daughters of the sea-god Nereus. But he was informed by Momos²—who seems to

¹ Compare a survey of them in Niebuhr, 1811, vol. i., pp. 142-158.

² Prometheus, the fore-seeing one, would seem to have made a better warner. Goethe, in his *Achilleïs*, distinctly

have been a sort of Court-fool, or satirically wise jester in the Celestial Court¹—that the Fates had decreed the son of Thetis should become greater than his father. Zeus, who would recollect how he and his brothers treated their father Saturnus, or Kronos, subverting his kingship, and how he, Saturn, had given the example thereof towards *his* father Uranus—Zeus gave up his courtship of Thetis, and favoured that of Peleus. That man was not immortal, nor to become so by his marriage; he was a good fighter, what they call a hero. If from his marriage with the goddess Thetis there sprang a son, he might easily be greater than his own father—and Achilles, the son, became so; more brilliant, one may suppose, by having a divine mother, but that could not enable him to subvert Jove's kingdom.

Other was to be the destiny of Achilles, as yet

places on the lips of Hera, still jealous of Thetis, the name of Prometheus, as the one who hindered the union of Zeus and the daughter of Nereus (*Achilleïs*, verse 179).

Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, pp. 86, 87, says: 'Dass Zeus sich mit Thetis beräth, nicht mit Momus, und zwar sowohl wegen der theilweisen Zerstörung der Menschen, als auch wegen der Verheirathung der Thetis. Und durch Thetis wird auch dem Zeus empfohlen, eine schöne Tochter selbst zu erzeugen.'

¹ Lucian, in his Dialogue 33.

unborn ; he it was, not Menelaos nor Paris, that was ultimately destined to be mated with Helena¹—the acme of heroic manhood with the acme of womanly beauty and gracefulness. When, at the end of all their adventures, these two high types are united mystically beyond the limits of Time and Place, there springs from them the graceful, strong child Euphoriion, whose name you hear ringing out from Goethe's verses. But this, again, is anticipating.

So those two, Peleus and Thetis, were united, and Catullus² could sing their epithalamium, or bridal hymn, and the pair could be made to speak in Landor's high prose—later on, and for ever.

But on the wedding-day those that belonged to Olympus all came—the gods and goddesses, from the high Zeus and Hera, down to the smallest that yet had a spark of divinity in them. All but one. And they brought presents to the wedding on Pelion. Chiron gave the long ash-tree which he had cut into a lance, Athene gave it the proper shape, and Hephaistos—Vulcan—added the metal. It was with this

¹ Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, vol. ii., p. 87.

² See Sir Theodore Martin's translation of Catullus, 2nd ed., 1875, pp. 99-122. In the song of the Parcæ, at the banquet, the birth of Achilles is foretold, as well as his victories before Troy, also the sacrifice of Polyxena.

god-given lance that Peleus conquered in battle, and his son Achilles¹ after him.

But one there was they had forgotten to invite. Does it not remind you of the forgotten fairy at the christening in Grimm's *Märchen*? The forgotten Eris²—that is, Strife and Envy—came uninvited, and threw a golden apple³ among the women gods, with the inscription 'To the Fairest.' Then a storm broke loose about the interpretation of the inscription. Whence to this day we have the expression, 'the Apple of Discord.'

To decide who was truly the fairest, the ladies, after long wrangling, or Zeus, the head of the family, fell upon the strange device to remit the decision to a handsome shepherd called Paris,⁴ and sometimes Alexandros, but not then otherwise known, who fed his flock on Mount Ida.⁵

¹ Welcker, *Der epische Cyclus*, vol. ii., p. 88.

² 'the abominable

That uninvited came
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board.'

TENNYSON: *Ænone*.

³ 'A fruit of pure Hesperian gold
That smelt ambrosially.'—*Ibid*.

⁴ *Ilias*, xxiv., verses 22-30; but the genuineness of the passage is disputed.

⁵ 'In the time of Strabo—contemporary of Augustus and Tiberius—the locality of the famous judgment of Paris

That was near the city of Troy, and overlooking that Hellespont where Phryxos, on his flight, lost his sister Helle, and which loving Leander swam across so many times to meet his love, Hero, and where he was finally drowned because he could not see her signalling torch.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Paris at that time had no acquaintance with the celestial ladies: he was to get it, fatally. His earthly goddess was still the 'beautiful-browed' *Ænone*,¹ whom you know, if not otherwise, from Tennyson's fine verses.²

We need not dwell at any length on the judgment of Paris, represented as it is in many a picture. It is alluded to by Homer in a passage³

was still shown, on a hill, then called Alexandria.—Wieland's note to Lucian, vol. ii., p. 131 (1788-1789).

¹ Apollodorus, book iii. The history of *Ænone* is told, briefly and with distinctness of detail, by Parthenius, in the Paris edition, introduced by Villemain, of *Aventures d'Amour*, 1822. *Vide* also Quintus Smyrnæus, *infra*.

² Tennyson's *Ænone*. The first time he treated the subject in his earlier poems; he returned to it in his last book.

³ *Iliad*, in the twenty-fourth and last book, verses 22-30. Paris's decision is briefly referred to in this passage, not without implying blame as to the unappeased Juno and Minerva. This comes singularly late in the story of the siege and in the course of the poem. Welcker says of

the genuineness of which is disputed. The story is related in verse and prose by Lucian,¹ in the second century, whilst the two Antonines flourished; by Apuleius, who died 190 B.C., giving the story towards the end of the tenth book of his *Golden Ass* in a vivid and detailed relation of a pantomime produced, with much *éclat*, at Corinth, distinctly, but in a general way only, referring to Homer, then apparently

these verses that they 'paraissent avoir été intercalés dans ce chant, composé lui-même postérieurement au reste du poème!' *Le Jugement de Paris*, etc. Firmin Didot, 1846 (Extrait des Annales de l'Institut Archéologique).

Duruy, in his vast book on Greece (Mahaffy's translation, vol. i., p. 142), says that the judgment of Paris and its consequences are 'a fable, later than Homer and Hesiod.' This might explain the lateness of the introduction of the story in *Iliad* xxiv. Of course, the account might be older, might be in the Cypriacs, and only be forgotten at the time when the bulk of the *Iliad* arose.

We must not lose sight of the fact that there is another tradition, giving for the appearance of Paris, in Greece, not the instigation of Venus, but his father Priam's attempt to obtain the liberation of Hesione, Priam's sister, a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks.

¹ *Dialogues of the Gods*, xx. One cannot but regret Miss Emily James Smith's not having included this bit in her charming *Selections from Lucian* (New York, 1892).

It is prettily rendered by L. C. Gail in his *Mythologie dramatique de Lucien* (Paris, 1798, pp. 63-79). Paris appears also, passingly, with reference to the consequences of his judgment, in the *Dialogues of the Dead* (*ibid.*, pp. 223, 224).

not yet doubted; by Coluthus Lycopolites,¹ a poet from Thebes in Egypt, who flourished under the Emperor Anastasius, about 500 A.D., and wrote many poems, of which this one has come down to us. In the Middle Ages the tale was repeated, amongst others, by the two authors, Lorris and Meun (Mehung), of the very long *Romaunt of the Rose*.² The monk Lydgate³ followed at great length; after, a French poet; in modern times by Congreve,⁴ by Wieland,⁵

¹ Translated by Mr. C., in *Poets of Great Britain*, by R. Anderson, 1793 *et seq.*, vol. xiii.

² 1328-1400. Once very popular, but passed by with but little esteem by Hallam. Chaucer translated a portion of it. Many editions: a curiously illustrated one, in Lyons, incomplete, confining itself to the Destruction of Troy, 1544; a complete one in 5 vols., by Pierre Masteau, with grammar and glossary, Paris. Paul Daffis, 1878-1880.

³ Born about 1370, in Suffolk, near Newmarket. A Benedict monk, he opened a school of rhetoric in his convent of Bury St. Edmunds. In his *Reson and Sensualyte*, a translation and amplification of a French version of the Italian Colonna's (temp. Edward I.) *Historia Trojana*, itself based on Dares; verses 993 to 2116. Early English Text Society, Extra Series, xxxiv.; ed. E. Sieper, 1901. Second and concluding volume, 1903.

⁴ William Congreve, 1672-1729, with music by Purcell and others. The little play is mentioned in Henry Morley's 'Sketch,' but omitted in subsequent editions. The editions 1701, 1753 (in the Works) and 1777 are in the British Museum. The piece is not reproduced in G. S. Street's editions of the comedies (Methuen, 1895).

⁵ 1733-1813.

by Leopold Schefer,¹ 1858, and recently by Tennyson.²

In Leconte de Lisle's sonorous and finely-chiselled verse Paris relates to Helen herself his adventure with the goddesses.³

Walter Savage Landor, in wishing to exalt Helena, says: 'Goddesses contended for the apple. Helen was afar.'⁴

The goddesses offered bribes: Juno (Hera), dominion over the lands of Asia; Minerva (Athenæ), great wisdom; Venus (Aphrodite), the fairest woman as a most loving wife; and other arguments may have been used.⁵

The shepherd Paris decided in favour of Venus (Aphrodite), who directed his course to Sparta, where lived 'the lovely-haired Helen,' of whom Pindar⁶ sings, and with him sing so many others, the wife of King Menelaos.

¹ Leopold Schefer; rather diffusely in Cantos 10, 11 and 12 of his *Homer's Apotheose*, 1858. The judgment episode (or poem) was supposed to be a publication by itself, and seemed lost; the pages have only just now been discovered and cut, for the present study, in the British Museum.

² 1809-1892.

³ This original turn of the story first appeared in *Poèmes antiques*, Paris, 1852.

⁴ Landor in *Achilles and Helena*.

⁵ Wieland.

⁶ *Odes. Olympian. III.* For Thereon of Akrogas (the second of the two). Reference is made to Tyndareus

The anger of the rejected goddesses remained. When at length the fall of Troy, the home of Paris, appeared near, there was a council of the gods of Olympus, in which moderate advice was given, and the Trojans were not to suffer the worst. But the ladies showed their anger. In the text ascribed to Homer, and in Lord Derby's translation :¹

‘The Counsel pleased the rest, but Juno still,
And Neptune, and the blue-eyed maid retained
The hatred unappeased, with which of old
Troy and her king and people they pursued ;
Since Paris to the rival goddesses,
Who to his sheepfold came, gave deep offence,
Preferring her who brought him in return
The fatal boon of too successful love.’

How far the story of the judgment of Paris penetrated into other or subsidiary subjects we may see in a play of Calderon (1600-1681). Odysseus, the poet of the Iberian peninsula, follows naturally the Latin name-form, impressed as it is, too, on the town of Ulysses, Lisbon. Ulysses, then, on his homeward wanderings, has come to the island of Circe, where his com-

‘hospitable sons and lovely-haired Helen.’ E. Myer’s translation, p. 10, 1874. Others prefer to translate ‘the golden-haired.’ ‘In sonnenhellen Haaren,’ says Uhland.

¹ (Stanley’s) Edward, Earl of Derby’s translation of the *Iliad*, 6th ed., 1867.

panions are exposed to the wiles and wilfulness of the beautiful witch, changing men into beasts. It is suggested to him to make an appeal to Juno, seeing that he was a leader among those Greeks who avenged the injury done by Paris on Mount Ida to the beautiful mother of gods. Surely the just and wholesome burning of Troy gives some claim to being aided in this conjuncture. So, in the *Jornada*, or Act I., Ulysses prays :

‘Juno, if through scorn of thee
Venus thus the Greeks oppress ;
Why, resenting this her scorn,
Dost thou not in turn defend them ?
Oh ! remember when thou wert
Wroth with Paris, to avenge thee,
Thou didst trust thee to our swords :
And that bloody deed remember,
How it was for thee we burnt
Ilium down, whose living embers
Raise sad monuments of smoke
O’er its ashes still unquenchèd ;
If, for wreaking thy revenge,
Such unnumbered ills have centred
All in us, O Juno fair,
Against Venus be our helper !’¹

¹ ‘Love the Greatest Enchantment (and two other plays) attempted strictly in English assonants and other imitative verse, by Denis Florence MacCarthy, with a (very learned) introduction, notes and the Spanish text.’ Longmans, 1861.

And, indeed, Iris is despatched by Juno to comfort the Greeks and promise help.¹

As to the treatment of this legend by the plastic arts, it behoves us Londoners to go, in the first instance, to the National Gallery, where we find the judgment of Paris depicted by no less an artist than Peter Paul Rubens (No. 194). The Wallace Collection (Gallery XIX., 444 and 475) presents us with two pictures on the subject, by François Boucher (1704-1770), and by Charlin, probably the former's pupil. Nearly every considerable gallery contains one or more paintings of the Judgment ; it has several times occupied the much-regretted great artist, George Frederick Watts. The earlier of his pictures on this subject is dated 1874, and shows three unclothed figures standing in a landscape. The one in the centre, with her back to the spectator, may remind one of Rubens' treatment. At a more advanced age he twice reverted to the tale : both pictures were (1885) called 'Olympus on Ida,' the three, more idealized, standing on a cloud.² A recent English painting by Mr.

¹ Later on, in *Jornada*, III., Achilles, too, comes forth from his tumulus to converse with Odysseus ; but he says nothing on that occasion about Helen, or in confirmation of the statement, to be cited further on, of Apollonius of Tyana.

² The older picture is in the hands of Watts' executors, the two newer ones in those of Sir Alexander Henderson

Solomon is familiar to most of us by its frequently-found photographic reproductions.

A very beautiful statue of Paris, with the fatal apple in his hand, is figured, front and back, in the splendid book on Canova (Rome, 1820).¹

Thorwaldsen made a fine statue, or statuette, of Venus at the Judgment of Paris, for Lord Lucan in 1815. The decision has been given; Venus is holding the apple in her right hand, contentedly looking at it; she seems, not haughtily (as the explaining Italian author says),² but, rather, modestly to appeal to the other goddesses for their assent.³

Similarly, Flaxman has chosen the moment immediately after the judgment. Venus, now not wholly unclothed, receives the apple from Paris, Cupid by her side. The other goddesses are fully dressed.⁴

and William R. Moss (*Catalogue of the Royal Academy's Winter Exhibition*, 1905).

¹ Recueil de statues, groupes, bustes, mausolées, colosses et monuments de tout genre, exécutés par Canova, dessinés et gravés sous les yeux d'auteur.

² The Abbate Missirini in *Thorwaldsen: Intera collezione*, Roma, 1831-1832.

³ As to representations of the judgment of Paris on vases, in mural paintings, and bas-reliefs, see Welcker, *ut supra*.

⁴ Flaxman's splendid illustrations to the *Odyssey* appeared in 1793, to the *Iliad* in 1795. Professor Sidney

ACHILLES.

It may have been about that time that two other events took place, of great moment in this story. The happy mother, Thetis, was rejoicing in her newborn beautiful baby boy. But she knew that this cherished and only son of silver-footed Thetis¹ would be mortal like his father. Fearful of the dangers which would be sure to wait on him when he should have become a man, seeing how readily men threaten one another, she resolved to make him at least invulnerable, so that he might hope to be spared suffering, and to pass away at last peacefully, after having in his old age filled the span of life granted to us. So, holding the boy Achilles by one heel, she plunged him into the waters of the Styx, the river leading to the Lower Regions, or into her own element, the Sea. Either was to have the desired effect. And invulnerable he became, except in that heel.²

Does not the story remind you of Siegfried, of his bath in the dragon's blood, the leaf of

Colvin's *Drawings of Flaxman in the Gallery of University College*, London, 1876, form a superb work.

¹ Walter Savage Landor, *Peleus and Thetis*.

² His mother may not have informed him in what spot he was vulnerable. When, a man, he first meets Helen

the linden falling on his neck, and there alone leaving him vulnerable? And because of that unprotected spot they both fell, when their hour had come, by the hand of the worse man.

Let us allow ourselves a digression into the East. A somewhat parallel story appears in the Mahabaratha, that immense collection of matters referring to Ancient India.

Gandhari, the mother of Duryodhana, was a woman of great sanctity. Her husband was born blind, and therefore she used to keep herself blindfolded. One day she said to her son: 'Come and stand entirely unclothed before me; I will look on you for one second, and your whole body will become as strong as steel.' But Duryodhana, feeling a natural delicacy, wrapped a scrap of cloth round the middle part of his body, otherwise altogether naked, with the result that that part of his body remained vulnerable. Bhima, his enemy, knowing of this fact, hit him on his thighs in battle, and thus killed him.

And now return to the far Northern mytho-

not far from Troy, and takes leave of her, Lander makes him say :

'My mother is reported to have left
About me only one part vulnerable;
I have at last found where it is.
Farewell.'

logy. There is a fourth almost invulnerable man or god—Balder. His safety, however, rests not upon his skin being favourably influenced, but upon an oath which his mother Frigga has obtained from all things not to hurt when thrown at him. Balder fell through the mistletoe which his mother had forgotten, or, on account of its insignificance, disregarded, and which his blind brother threw at him.

Is it not delightful to find that, in three out of four stories, it is the mother's care which, although ultimately unavailing, extends such loving protection over the child ?

YOUNG PARIS.

Meanwhile, away in Troy, Hecuba, or Hekabe, the wife of King Priam, had had a dream, telling her she was going to bring forth, not a child, but a torch that would sere the stately Ilium.¹ So when the baby Paris was born, imagination dwelt on the dangers that had risen with him, and it was resolved not to bring up the child. He was exposed in the woods.² But,

¹ Apollodorus.

² Welcker, *Der epische Cycclus*, vol. ii., p. 90, refers to Proclus, and to many pictures on vases, as to the exposing of Paris.

as in similar tales, the plan failed—Romulus and Remus are an instance; Œdipus, another; Cyrus, a third; Tom Thumb, a fourth. It is in the nature of the *Märchen* that children so treated by human beings shall be somehow saved, often by creatures of a lower rank. The English Babes in the Wood form an exception. Yet even their innocent bodies are lovingly covered by the birds of heaven. But Romulus was suckled by a she-wolf; Telephos, the son of Hercules, by a doe; and Paris by a bear.¹ Human beings helped them farther on. Thus, Paris became a shepherd, and his life was graced by the love of C  none, a nymph who possessed the knowledge and art of magic healing powers, whereof we are to hear more.

It is not always easy to establish in these legends a satisfactory succession of events; the time mentioned or alluded to as intervening is sometimes too short, at other times too long. Still, we must suppose that it was soon after the visit of the goddesses that the elderly couple, the unknown young shepherd's parents, bethought themselves that perhaps they had been rash in rejecting that son. And having

¹   lianus, book xii., chap. 42. He also mentions the nursing of Pelias, a son of Neptune and Tyre, by a mare; of   gistheus, by a she-goat.

by their own fault lost him, they ordered a sort of memorial festival in his honour. It was somewhat like the Olympian games, or a tournament in the Christian Middle Ages. To these jousts, and lance-throwing, and running and wrestling, the young men from the environs came. Paris, too, was admitted; he overcame all the King's sons, was recognised and installed with them as Prince—the real Prince Beautiful! Cassandra warned and prophesied that evil would arise—as usual, in vain.

And after awhile Prince Paris, or Alexandros, guided by his patroness Aphrodite, sailed for Greece and Helen, leaving C  none weeping, forgetting her in his new intoxication, as Siegfried, at the Burgundian Court, forgot Brunhild.¹

IN SPARTA.

But it is time now to revert to the childhood and the young-womanhood of Helen herself.

King Tyndareus ruled over the broad lands of Sparta, and Leda was the name of his Queen.

¹ The parting of C  none and Paris is a scene worth reading in Thomas Heywood's play of *The Iron Age*, Act I., scene i., Works, 1874, vol. iii. Most readers will remember Tennyson's youthful poem 'C  none.'

Herself very beautiful,¹ she became, by Jupiter the Swan, the mother of Helena.² Another daughter was Clytemnestra, who was to become the unhappy spouse of great Agamemnon. But long before the days of storm and stress, let us

¹ Leda and the swan have often been represented by poets and statuaries. Thus in Zahn's great work, *Ornamente und Gemälde aus Pompei*, etc., 1828-1863, we have, in the 'House of the Tragic Poet,' Leda with the 'nest' of the three children, Helen, Castor, and Pollux, the first very prominent (I. 23). The picture III. 11 repeats the subject, Helen less prominent.

The beautiful work *Les dieux et demi-dieux*, which Théophile Gautier, Arsène Houssaye and Paul de Saint-Victor brought out in 1885, contains a very fine head of Leda, looking, however, more attractive than elegant, and ascribed to Leonardo Vinci. Sir Edward Poynter and Percy Head, in *Classic and Italian Painting*, in the same year, do not support this; p. 137 contains a list of all that remains to us of Leonardo: Leda is not in it; and on p. 150 the destruction of a Leda by Michael Angelo is mentioned. Correggio is reported by Lübke, in his *Kunstgeschichte*, to have painted several Ledas, one of which is in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin.

² Pausanias, apropos of a statue by Phidias which he seems still to have seen, says: 'According to the Greeks, Helen was the daughter of Nemesis, and Leda was her nurse. But they all agree in naming Zeus as her father, not Tyndareus.' Phidias, following this tradition, has represented on the base of his monument Leda leading Helen to (her mother) Nemesis (Pausanias, book ii., chap. 32). Homer knows Helen, indeed, as the daughter of Zeus (*vide Ilias*, iii. 237, 246; *Odyssey*, iv. 184); but the generation in the swan-form he knows not (Voss,

see the sisters at play, as Meleager and our poet Swinburne saw them :

MELEAGER.

One swan-white,
The little Helen, and less fair than she
Fair Clytemnestra, grave as pasturing fawns
Who feed and fear some arrow ; but at whiles,
As one smitten with love or wrung with joy,
She laughs and lightens with her eyes, and then
Weeps ; whereat Helen, having laughed, weeps too,
And the other chides her, and she being chid, says nought
But cheeks and lips, and eyelids, kisses her,
Laughing ; so fare they, as in their bloomless bud
And full of unblown life, the blood of gods.

ALTHÆA.

Sweet days befall them and good loves and lords,
And tender and temperate honours of the hearth,
Peace, and a perfect life.¹

Two sons of Leda, the ' Heavenly Twins ' of that remote age, were Castor and Pollux, or Polydeukes.² These Dioscuri appear in electric

note 14 to *Odyssey*, iv.). Apollodorus relates how a shepherd finds an egg in the woods, takes it to Leda, who encloses it in a box, and in the proper time Helen comes out of it, and is brought up by Leda as if she were her own daughter. This is a combination of the two legends : Zeus = Nemesis (as in the Cyprian verses), and Jupiter = Leda. Thus Apollodorus or his abbreviator (*Bibliothèque d'Apollodore. Texte et traduction par E. Clavier. Paris, 1805, iii., 10*).

¹ Atalanta in Calyden, 1865.

² In Pindar's Olympian Ode iii. the Dioscuri are called 'Tyndareus' hospitable sons' and 'deep-girdled Leto's

fires on the masts of ships, and that is considered a favourable omen. But when only one light is seen, it is called Helen's light, or, briefly, Helen; and this is an unfavourable omen, because Helen was the cause of the grievous Trojan War.¹ Helen loved her brothers much. 'O my sweet brothers!' she exclaims in Walter Savage Landor's prose poem, 'how they tended me! How they loved me!' And in Homer a pang shoots through her when, looking out from the top of the Skæan gate in Ilium, she sees below her all the Greek leaders, only her brothers wanting.

children' (E. Myer's translation, p. 13, London, 1874). *Vide* further on the essay *De deâ Helena*, where Helen is apparently identified with her mother Leda, with Leto (the mother, by Zeus, of Apollo and Artemis-Diana), and with Diana-Artemis. Helen, then, would be the daughter of the Leto of the ode. The paternity is divided between Zeus for Polydeukes, and Tyndareus for Castor (Pindar's Nemean Ode x.; Myer, pp. 140, 141).—Yet both are occasionally called, now the sons of their dear father Zeus, now of Tyndareus. When Castor has fallen in fight, Pollux, rather than be altogether of celestial race, and abide continually in heaven, shares his own privilege and the destiny of his brother on alternate days and nights with the latter. They dwell one day with Zeus, and the next in the secret places under the earth (Myer, *ut supra*). Theocritus makes both brothers sons of Zeus (Idyll xxii., 'The sons of Leda,' Calverley's translation, 1883).

¹ Creutzer speaks of the Dioscuri *and* Helen as 'protective deities' (*Symbolik*, vol. ii., p. 343).

‘Have they alone not been willing to come? Have they been kept away on account of my lost honour?’¹ Alas! she knows not yet that the soil of their common country already covers their bodies.

Let us hear Swinburne on the brothers, too :

ALTHÆA.

Who are these shining like one Sundered star?

MELEAGER.

Thy sister’s sons, a double flower of men.

ALTHÆA.

O sweetest kin to me in all the world,
O twin-born blood of Leda, gracious heads
Like kindled lights in untempestuous heaven,
Fair flower like stars in the iron foam of fight,
With what glad heart and kindliness of soul,
Even to the staining of both eyes with tears
And kindling of warm eyelids with desire,
A great way off I greet you, and rejoice,
Seeing you so fair and moulded like as gods.²

Here we may introduce from the Homeric Hymns, in Andrew Lang’s translation :

XVI. Of Castor and Polydeuces do thou sing, shrill Muse, the Tyndaridæ, sons of Olympian Zeus, whom Lady Leda bore beneath the crests of Taygetus, having been secretly conquered by the desire of Cronion of the

¹ *Vide* the touching passage in the *Iliad*, iii. 236-244.

² Atalanta in Calyden.

dark clouds. Hail, ye sons of Tyndarus, ye cavaliers of swift steeds !

XXXII. Sing, fair glancing Muses, of the sons of Zeus, the Tyndaridæ, glorious children of fair-ankled Leda, Castor the tamer of steeds and faultless Polydeuces. These, after wedlock with Cronion of the dark clouds, she bore beneath the crests of Taygetus, that mighty hill, to be the saviour of earthly men, and of swift ships when the wintry breezes rush along the pitiless sea. Then men from their ships call in prayer with sacrifice of white limbs when they mount the vessel's deck. But the stormy wind and the wave of the sea drive down their ship beneath the water ; when suddenly appear the sons of Zeus rushing through the air with tawny wings, and straightway have they stilled the tempests of evil winds, and have lulled the waves in the gulfs of the white salt sea : glad signs are they to mariners, an ending of their labour : and men see it and are glad, and cease from weary toil. Hail ye, Tyndaridæ, ye knights of swift deeds ! anon will I be mindful of you and of another lay.¹

Helen's descent from the father of the gods, set a seal of distinction on all her life, and seemed propitious even in misfortune, never allowing hope to be entirely lost. A gleam of that light would fall on others, too, near to her. When, later on, Menelaos, her lawful husband, on his way back from Troy, appeared to be in deep and seemingly irremediable trouble, the sea-god Proteus prophesies him a happy death and a quiet rest in the Elysian fields ;

¹ The 'Homeric Hymns,' a new prose translation ; and essays, literal and mythological, 1899.

that could not fail, for, says he: 'Thou hast Helen, and Zeus honours you as his son-in-law.'¹

THESEUS AND HELEN.

In earliest youth already Helen attracted the desires of men. We hear of her as being forcibly abducted by Theseus, King of Athens. She was then dancing in the temple of Diana Luna.² Different accounts speak of her as being then of the age of seven or eleven or fourteen—at any rate, very young.³ Even so, some say that a daughter was born of this connection—no less a person than our Iphigenia, the strong-born, the swift-born—and that Helen's sister, the married lady Clytemnestra, adopted the child as her own, not to compromise Helen.⁴ Or, again, Racine, in

¹ *Odyssey*, iv. 561-570.

² F. Creutzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, vol. iv., p. 150. Ersch und Gruber, *Theseus*.

³ Larcher, in his essay on chronology, disposed to take much as law and gospel, gives Theseus the age of fifty, 'lorsqu'il enleva Hélène qui n'était pas encore nubile' (*Herodote*, vol. ix., pp. 292, 293).

⁴ Pausanias, book ii., chap. 22, relates: The Dioscuri took Aphidnæ, and brought Helen back to Lacedæmonia. She was then approaching motherhood, according to the statement of the people of Argos; and having given birth there, she built the temple of Ilythya, and entrusted her girl-child to Clytemnestra, who was already married to

his play, has shown us that the daughter of Helen and Theseus is Eriphyle, who ends by being sacrificed, or, rather, sacrifices herself, in the place of the real Iphigenia, the daughter of Clytemnestra.

Whilst King Theseus was away from Athens, Helen's brothers came to her rescue.¹ But the King's men pursued them, and the fugitive party might have been drowned or stifled in the morasses of Eleusis. However, Chiron, the man-horse, appeared—as you can read in the pretty scene in Goethe's classical *Walpurgisnacht*,² where the adventure is related—and bore

Agamemnon. Subsequently she married Menelaos. The poets Euphorion of Chalkis and Alexander of Pleuron, agreeing on this point with the Argos people, repeat the statement of Stesichorus of Himera—viz., that Iphigenia was the daughter of Theseus.

Grote, speaking of the poet Stesichorus, of whom more later on, says that Stesichorus also affirmed that Iphigenia was the daughter of Helen by Theseus, and was born at Argos, before her marriage with Menelaos, and made over to Clytemnestra (vol. i., pp. 282, 283).

¹ Creutzer, *Symbolik*, vol. iv., p. 147.

² *Faust*, II., Act II. Perhaps, or probably, this flight and rescue, related by Chiron to Faust, is figured forth in an important picture by a modern, justly famous, German artist, Boecklin, painted for and exhibited by the Berlin National Gallery. He had an open commission, and chose not to give a name to his rich composition. The critic G. Hauck, 1884, has called it 'The Elysian

Helen on his back through the obstacles. It is curious to note that they managed to carry off, probably as a hostage during the flight, the mother of Theseus, Aithra, whom we shall meet again, long afterwards.

Helen was young then—how many the years it matters not to calculate¹—in the days when Theseus made her his own. She learnt to love him, or the memory of him. Long years after the poet interprets her feeling. He makes her say burning words as she stands alone on the walls of Troy, shortly before their fall. Not with regret, but with pride, she looks back at the time

‘When that great lord, the one man worshipful,
Would grace his triumph, strengthen his large joy
With splendour of the swan-begotten child,
Nor asked a ten years’ siege to make acquit
Of all her virgin store. No dream that was,
The moonlight in the woods, our singing stream
Eurotas, the sleek panther at my feet,
And on my heart a hero’s strong right hand.
O draught of love immortal! Dastard world,
Too poor for Theseus and for Helena.’²

Fields’ (Die Gefilde der Seligen), and the artist has not protested. This name, however, can cover only one-third of the large canvas, and in how far it applies at all to Chiron, bearing the very fine and ripely developed young woman, is not apparent. That the painter was fond of fabulous animals explains nothing here. Compare the scene in *Faust*, II.: ‘Rege dich, du Schilfgeflüster.’

¹ ‘Den Poeten bindet keine Zeit.’—Goethe, *Faust*, II., Act II.

² E. Dowden, *Poems*, 1872.

THE WOOERS—ACHILLES.

The renown of Helen's beauty being spread wide abroad after this adventure, suitors came from all parts of Greece. Apollodorus, a later writer, about 140 B.C., gives the whole list, and they all promise to defend, if need be, the one that shall be chosen.

A much later writer, Dion Chrysostomos,¹ a contemporary of the Emperor Trajan,² adds Paris himself to the suitors; he gains the prize by virtue of his great riches, marries Helen, and sails away with her. This gives the whole matter another aspect; but we need not dwell here on this troublesome critic of the Homeric tradition; we shall meet him again later on.

In Thomas Heywood's remarkable play, *The Iron Age*, Helen, when Paris comes to Sparta, regrets his not having been among the suitors: she would have preferred him to Menelaos.³

¹ Not to be confounded with the celebrated Father of the Church and orator, John Chrysostomus, 347-497 A.D.

² 96-117 A.D.

³ 'Had you then sett sayle

When . . .

A thousand gallant princely suitors came,

Had I beheld thee first, I here proclaim

Your feature should have borne me from the rest.

You came too late.'

Works, vol. iii., p. 279.

In Apollodorus, Patroclus is the last name on the list, which does not contain that of Achilles.

Helen herself admits favouring Patroclus,¹ who was the friend of Achilles, and afterwards fell, before Troy, in the armour of the greater man. She frankly declares her preference,² and strengthens or justifies it with the friend's perfect likeness to Achilles.³ But King Tyndareus decides in favour of Menelaos, the brother of Agamemnon, both being sons of Atreus, the King of Mycenæ, whose historic existence seems proved by the excavations of Schliemann.⁴ The marriage is consummated.⁵ It has given

¹ Paul de Saint-Victor, in his charming *Hommes et Dieux*, says that, after the Theseus episode, 'Achille l'entraîne ensuite dans sa violente existence, puis il la cède à Patrocle, comme un butin partagé.' Where are the sources, if any, of this statement?

² 'Doch stille Gunst vor Allen, wie ich gern gesteh;
Gewann Patroklus, er des Peliden Ebenbild.'

GOETHE: *Faust*, II., III.

³ Pausanias, ii. 24, says that Achilles did not come to ask of Tyndareus the hand of Helen; Patroclus was one of the *prétendants*. Homer says in the beginning of the *Iliad* (I. 52) that Achilles came to Troy to please the Atrides; he was not bound by any oath to Tyndareus.

⁴ 'Doch Vaterwille traute Dich an Menelas,
Den kühnen Seedurchstreicher, Hausbewahrer auch.'

GOETHE: *Faust*, II.

⁵ Landor makes the wooing of Helen the subject of one of the five posthumous conversations, 'The Marriage of Helen and Menelaos,' which J. Forster published as an

rise to the beautiful Epithalamium, or Wedding Hymn, of Theocritus, translated into English by Calverley.¹ The father at the same time abdicated, and from an apparently happy life—scarcely a love-match—springs a daughter, Hermione.² This, according to most accounts, or, at any rate, to the one most generally accepted, is Helen's only child.³ Others also mention a son in Sparta, and also a son, or several sons, in Troy.⁴

appendix to the biography (Works, vol. i., p. 533 *et seq.* Here we have some pretty touches of Helen's appearance on that occasion. We are told of 'Helen's rosebud face,' and the girls addressing Menelaos speak of

‘Helen, in whose eyes
The loves for ever play.’

¹ ‘The Bridal of Helen’ in Calverley's Theocritus. Into German by Arnold Ruge: *Helena's Brautkammerlied* in *Wanderbuch*, Leipzig, 1874. Cf. also the allusion in ‘A Countryman's Wooing,’ by Calverley, and *Die Hirtenhochzeit*, by Ruge, as above. A much older translation of the Epithalamium is found in the *Teutsche Merkur*, 1775, iii.

² ‘Die Tochter gab er, gab des Reichs Bestallung ihm.
Aus ehelichem Beisein sprossste dann Hermione.’

GOETHE: *Faust*, II.

³ *Odyssey*, iv. 12-14.

⁴ Ersch and Gruber mention also a daughter, Helena, who is killed by Hecuba at the taking of Troy. The parents quarrelled about the name; the father wanted her to be named Alexandra, the mother preferred Helena; the decision was given for her by lot. Compare also K. Lehrs (*Aufsätze*), who refers to Photius. Other children

In the *Hellenics* of Walter Savage Landor, Menelaos, on the taking of Troy, reproaches her with abandoning her child, who 'could scarce have clasped thy knee, if she had felt thee leaving her.' And Helen replies: 'Oh, my child! my only one!'¹

are mentioned by Ersch and Gruber. Sophocles speaks of two sons, called Diæthos and Morraphias. According to Dictys, Helen had by Paris four sons—Brunichos, Korythos, Aganos, and Idalos. Lehrs also records these four sons of Paris and Helena, and refers to *Schol. Lycophronis*, 851. Old Alexandrian grammarians knew, it appears, a son Dardanus. Korythos is mentioned by Nikander, in Parthenius, 34. The very late Johannes Tzetzes of Constantinople, in the second half of the twelfth century, claims to know of four sons. Of his *Iliaca* (in three parts), *Antehomerica*, *Homerica et Post-homerica*, there seem to exist editions by Jacobs, 1793, and J. Bekker, 1816, which the curious—the *very* curious—may consult.

¹ W. S. Landor, *The Hellenics* (1st ed.), 1847, pp. 62, 63. Thus, too, in the *Iliad*, iii. 175, 'Leaving my darling daughter and youthful playmates.'

CHAPTER II

IN SPARTA AND TROY

Now the handsome Trojan Prince appears on the stage, either whilst Menelaos is away battling in Crete,¹ where he must have gone repeatedly,² or before he sets out for such expedition, leaving Paris behind as an honoured guest to stay on during his (the King's) absence.

If these two young people, hampered, perhaps, as to oral converse by their surroundings, had the desire and courage to write to one another, would it not be charming to read their love-letters? Well, there they are—a little long for ordinary billets-doux; but, then, so are those of Abélard and Héloïse, and there was, perhaps, not often an opportunity for such an exchange. Ovid wrote

¹ ‘Doch als er fern sich Creta's Erbe kühn erstritt,
Der Einsamen da erschien ein allzuschöner Gast.’

GOETHE : *Faust*, II.

² The stewardess is at Sparta already when Paris comes, and she was brought, as a slave, from a Cretan expedition.

them in the time of the Emperor Augustus,¹ and he seems to have known much about love and its ways. Paris is full of admiration, which, a little more distantly, is shared by Helen. He warmly presses his suit. She is at first indignant, then struggling with herself, gradually yielding, finally considering ways and means, all of it being very characteristic, very convincing, it seems to me.

The love-making between the two is spiritedly depicted by Thomas Heywood. Paris is passionate, Helen coquettish as well as passionate. That she be invited to a feast on board ship is her own suggestion, while she must apparently be forced. Only, he must promise not to send her back again. She wants to go to Troy.²

With great poetic charm the successive changes in Helen's disposition are painted by Leconte de Lisle, from

'Va ! que Zeus te protège ! Je ne quitterai point Sparte,'
to

'Viens, Priamide ! viens ! je t'aime et je t'attends.'³

¹ 31 B.C. to 14 A.D. These letters form, of course, only a portion of Ovid's *Heroides* or *Epistolæ*. They have attracted many a lover and many a writer of verse. Probably the oldest of many translations into English is the one dated 1567, which may well have given pleasure to the Virgin Queen.

² *The Iron Age*, i. ; Works, vol. iii., pp. 277-287.

³ *Poèmes antiques*, 1852 ; 2nd edit., 1881, pp. 81-124. (Many leaves in the Brit. Mus. copy only now cut.)

Somewhat differently the episode presents itself to the mind of Walter Savage Landor. For an episode only — albeit a long and ultimately painful one — it was in Helen's life, whose final destination lay, not towards Paris, but towards Achilles.

Landor's imagination conceived a meeting between Achilles and Helen, during the siege of Troy, in the neighbourhood of the besieged city.¹ The goddesses Aphrodite-Venus and Thetis, the mother of Achilles, brought her there in a cloud — 'on this very ground where we are now reposing' the fatal prize of beauty had been adjudged — and they will take her back, safely and unseen, into the city. She confesses to Achilles :

'Menelaos, it is true, was fond of me when Paris was sent by Aphrodite to our house. It would have been very wrong to break my vow to Menelaos, but Aphrodite' — the victrix in the beauty-contest, who was under promise to the bribed judge Paris — 'urged me day and night, telling me that to make her break her promise to Paris would be quite inexpiable.'

Achilles asks: 'Was it force that bore thee off?' and Helen replies: 'It was some evil

¹ In the *Hellenics*, Forster's edition, vol. vii., pp. 490-495.

god.’¹ The same convenient personification of desire occurs at the end of the third canto

¹ In the Museum of Naples is an ancient bas-relief, showing how Aphrodite persuades Helen. It is reproduced by V. Duruy in his *History of Greece* (translated by Mahaffy), 8 vols., 1892; vol. i., p. 243. On the right stands Paris, clothed in a chlamys only, beckoning Helen to himself; on the left Helen is sitting, more fully clothed, looking towards Paris, but apparently calmly, certainly not resolute. Three divinities assist the wooing—Love, unclothed, with wide-spreading wings, his hand encouragingly on the Trojan’s shoulder; by Helen’s side, but away from the spectator, sits Aphrodite, of higher stature than Helen, her right arm folded round the latter’s shoulder, while Helen’s right hand rests, as it seems, trustingly, but not fully persuaded, on the body of the divine counsellor; in the background sits Peitho, the Goddess of Persuasion. (Helen herself later on, after her return from Troy, relates that Aphrodite caused the unfortunate love for Paris (*Odyssey*, iv. 261). Thus also Penelope refers Helen’s temptation to Venus-Aphrodite, to whom she had yielded too rashly, not considering the evils which were to follow (*Odyssey*, xxiii. 218-224). On neither occasion is the judgment of Paris mentioned. The antiquary A. L. Millin, 1759-1818, possessed several Helen statues. His successor, James Millin, in 1827 sold one for 14,775 thalers (about £2,215) to the Berlin Museum. Helen, seated, fondles on her knee a winged Eros. Paris stands before her, his lance held by his right hand, the left beckoning to Helen. W. Zahn, in his magnificent collection of 300 plates, being *Ornaments and Pictures from Pompei, Herculaneum, and Stabiae* (Berlin, 1828-1865), gives under No. 44 a ‘Mars and Venus.’ It is more likely meant for Helen and Paris. Venus did not require to be led

of the *Iliad*, and pictorial artists have naïvely accepted it. ‘And,’ continues Helen, ‘she told Paris the same thing at the same hour, and as often. He repeated it to me every morning: his dreams tallied with mine exactly. At last . . .’

Achilles interrupts: ‘The last is not yet come.’

IN TROY.

In the end Paris and Helen fled from the house of Menelaos—Helen willing, according to the generally received tradition, but according to others not without the need or formality of forcible abduction.¹

The scene of their flight and embarkation has often been represented by the painter’s art. You

to Mars by amoretts. Half resisting, half yielding to these, the lady is rather in the character of our Helen. In another fine picture (ii. 31), representing Paris and Helen, the lady sits apart, beautiful and grave-looking. Zahn believes it is Helen repenting, and refers to *Iliad*, iii. But perhaps her expression may seem, not the mingling regret and indignation felt by the unhappy woman near the fall of Troy, but, rather, her divided feeling previous to her flight from Sparta, and not without anxious presentiments. Paris, sitting apart, leaves her to her own thoughts, feeling the decision will be in his favour.

¹ Thus W. S. Landor in the *Hellenics*, Sir Lewis Morris in the *Epic of Hades*, Leconte de Lisle in *Hélène*.

find in the National Gallery (No. 591) a picture on the subject by Benozzo Gozzoli. The Princess and her ladies are being carried off to a ship by Paris and his Trojan companions—a composition of many small figures. The Wallace Collection also contains a Rape of Helen (in Gallery XI., No. 634) by Platzer. It may be sufficient to refer to Guido Reni's and Claude Lorraine's paintings at Chatsworth. A picture made by a pupil of Raphael's from that master's composition was once in the Campana Museum, and is now somewhere in Russia.¹ Here Helen is struggling. In the various prints which Winckelmann has published, she is willing.²

¹ Larousse.

² Thus, in Winckelmann's *Monuments inédits, gravés par David*, we have (No. 116) Paris and Helen about to depart on a ship, pointed at by Helena, with encouraging gesture. She is the more advanced of the two, with resolute face calling Paris forward, who appears still sitting. And in No. 117 we see Helen being taken away by Paris on a quadriga, she standing on the vehicle already, the ripe woman not in the least hesitating, he springing up to her, his right foot only just lifted from the ground.

In one of the many curious woodcuts adorning the remarkable folio *Recueil des Histoires de Troye* (Lyons, 1544), Helen seems, from the right of the design, to look with considerable equanimity on the fight which rages on the left, the Trojans—Æneas, Antenor, and Polydamus—pressing back the Spartans who would prevent the flight. She leans against Paris on her right; her left hand is held

But not only is she willing, not only is this an *affaire du cœur*; but she and her lover also take considerable treasure from the palace, and this is an aggravating circumstance which, in the course of subsequent events, is repeatedly and bitterly mentioned. Helen was then about twenty-five.

The Roman poet Horace¹ shows Nereus, the sea-god, stilling the waves, not for the comfort of the fugitives, but to foretell Paris, 'the perfidious shepherd,' the terrible future, so different from what he had promised his beloved to expect. The poet seems not without some feeling for Helen, but is altogether unfavourable to Paris.

Our poet Lewis Morris, on the other hand, is entirely in sympathy with Helen. One account

by Deiphobus—later on her brother-in-law, later still her third husband—who is about to assist her up the gangway to the ship. A vase by the potter Hiero and the painter Makron—figured in the *Gazette Archéologique*, vol. vi., 1880, and reproduced by Duruy, *History of Greece*—shows her rather as resigned, neither ardent nor forced. Æneas is followed by Paris, both striding. The latter leads Helen, whose steps seem slow. Paris's face is turned towards Helen, whom he holds by the right wrist. Her head is downcast, but over her chiton she wears the bridal peplos. Aphrodite, behind her, adjusts the bride's garment, draws it over her forehead, holds a wreath upon her head. Peitho (Persuasion) follows with a flower in her hand. A last figure, appearing at a little distance, represents, perhaps, the artist himself.

¹ *Odes*, i. 15.

says that they took just three days for the voyage from Sparta to Troy. That would be very fair sailing. Our poet makes Helen say :

‘I fled willing from my prison and the pain
Of undesired caresses, and the wind
Was fair, and, on the third day as we sailed,
My heart was glad within me when I saw
The towers of Ilium rise beyond the wave.’¹

This joy on arriving at Troy seems by no means incompatible with the sorrow Helen manifests, nine years (or more) later, at finding herself still there. The young woman, however attractive still, was past the bloom of her expansive years, and disillusion had set in.

Other writers let them wander about for a long time, not without some more or less piratical adventures in Phoenicia,² Paris bringing from Sidon some embroidered veils or tapestry. Others, again, tell not of common flight from the palace of Menelaos, but of a meeting in the island of Cythera, sacred to Venus, where first the love-knot was tied, and whence the fatal flight began.³

¹ Sir Lewis Morris, *Epic of Hades*, p. 106.

² Homer, *Iliad*, vi. 282, 286.

³ This view recommends itself to the English poet-monk Lydgate, who, saying that Paris was visited there by Helen, describes her as

‘This fayre Heleyne, this freshe lusty quene.’

THE AVENGERS BEFORE TROY.

Some time must have elapsed before the discovery of the untoward event at Sparta was spread about among the admirers of Helen—more still, to obtain their consent to act in her rescue, to send a summons to Troy demanding restoration of wife and treasure. Both are refused, Helen herself declaring she will not go, claiming relationship with Priam and protection resulting therefrom, and affirming that nothing was taken but what belonged to her personally¹—an early assertion of the principle of the Married Woman's Property Act.

Still more time was required to gather the fighting forces of the allied Princes—allied in admiration of Helen, and by their plighted word for her—and to effect their final sailing from Aulis. The legend gives nine years to this intermediate period, but does not fill it in with sufficient detail. Was Helen happy with Paris? happy in his love continued during all that long period?

The *Iliad*, no doubt, is full of details. But you recollect it is not the chronicle of the siege, but only gives an episode—a very rich one, no doubt—of the last year preceding the fall. And

¹ Dictys.

its hero is Achilles. Let us take from it two characteristic scenes which both show the difficult position in which Helen must have found herself among the Trojans as the evils of the war dragged on and increased, and her own mind divided between her love for Paris and the regret for what she had lost. Yes, love for Paris, though, in a sense, also aversion.

The bitterness against her of many of those surrounding her could not escape Helen ; but though she was felt to be the cause of the war, her beauty and grace maintained her sway and kept the hostile in awe, whilst from some she met even with tenderness—foremost among them the old King, and her brother-in-law, noble Hector.

In book iii. of the *Iliad* we have the great combined attack by all the Greeks, except Achilles, who is still angry with Agamemnon, and keeps with his men to his tents and ships. Paris appears in the front rank of the Trojans ; his ‘divine beauty’ is expressly mentioned. Menelaos advances ; eager to meet Paris and to ‘punish the guilty man,’ he leaps from his chariot. Paris draws back from him, his heart beating quickly, his cheeks paled with fear of death ; he re-enters the ranks of the Trojans. His brother Hector chides him in unmeasured

terms. 'Would to God,' he says, 'you had never been born, or had died before you set about making love to Helena!' whom he refers to as 'thy beautiful wife,' and whom he carefully refrains from insulting. 'But the Trojans,' he adds, 'are cowards, else they had long ago stoned you to death, for the harm you have caused.' Paris, thus stung to the quick, but referring to the gifts he has received from the gods, offers to fight Menelaos, in single combat, for Helen and the treasure :

' And whoe'er shall prove
The better man in conflict, let him bear
The woman and the spoils in triumph home ;'

whilst both armies and nations shall thenceforth dwell peacefully, those in Greece, these in the plains of Troy.

Hector makes proclamation to this effect ; Menelaos accepts the challenge ; there is a general truce. Sacrifice to the gods is to precede the duel, and is to be offered by Priam. The hosts partly disarm, and lie around to witness the fight.

ON THE SKÆAN GATE.

Now the goddess Iris—the rainbow, the messenger of the gods—assuming the form of Laodice, ‘of Priam’s daughters all loveliest of face,’ goes to Helen’s chamber, in the palace of Paris, and invites her to come and see the fight. She finds Helen weaving

‘A mighty web of double woof and brilliant hues,
Whereon was interwoven many a toilsome strife
Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks.’¹

Iris fans in Helen’s breast a longing for her former husband, her home, her parents. ‘Come, sister dear,’ she says, ‘and see the glorious deeds.’ Helen throws over her head a snowy veil, and accompanied by her maids they go to the platform on the Skæan gate.²

‘Attending there on aged Priam, sat
The Elders of the City,—
By age exempt from war, but in discourse
Abundant,—
Helen they saw, as to the tower she came;

¹ I again use Lord Derby’s beautiful translation.

² The scene at the Skæan gate gave the German painter A. J. Carsten the subject of an aquarelle, which is at Weimar, and has been engraved by W. Müller, and described by F. von Alten (*Carsten’s Werke*, Oldenburg, 1866, p. 34).

And "Tis no marvel," one to other said,
"The valiant Trojans and the well-greaved Greeks
For Beauty such as this should long endure
The toils of war : for goddess-like she seems ;
And yet, despite her beauty, let her go,
Nor bring on us and our sons a curse."

Thus they, but the old King is all tenderness :

"Come here, my child, and sitting by my side,
From whence thou canst discern thy former lord,
His kindred and thy friends (not thee I blame,
But to the gods I owe this woeful war) ;
Tell me the name of yonder mighty chief
Among the Greeks, a warrior brave and strong :
Others in height surpass him ; but my eyes
A form so noble never yet beheld,
Nor so august ; he moves, a King indeed !"
To whom in answer, Helen, heavenly fair :
"With reverence, dearest father, and with shame
I look on thee ; oh, would that I had died
That day when hither with thy son I came,
And left my husband, friends, and darling child,
And all the loved companions of my youth :
That I died not, with grief I pine away.
But to the question : I will tell thee true.
Yon chief is Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Wide reigning, mighty monarch, ruler good
And valiant warrior ; in my husband's name,
Lost as I am, I called him brother once."

At Priam's request, she points out other chiefs, Odysseus, Ajax, Idomeneus ; *not* Achilles, for he still keeps away, angry ; nor, as mentioned before, Castor and Pollux, her brothers. The

pained woman knows not that they lie buried in Lacedæmon.¹

The fight comes off, in which Menelaos is favoured by Athena; it goes against Paris, who, however, is rescued by Aphrodite. This goddess then calls Helen away from the company on the Skæan gate; unwilling, she follows to her palace, where Paris expects her. She upbraids him: 'Back from the battle? Would thou hadst died beneath a warrior's arm, whom once I called my husband.'

But the storm is calmed by Aphrodite's influence,² and the scene closes in loving embraces.

Agamemnon proclaims the victory and claims the prize.

¹ Thus the *Iliad*, iii. 243, 244. But not so in the *Odyssey*, xi. 298-304, where they are said to be still alive—each alternately enjoying one day's existence above the grave, passing the next one below; much later, when Odysseus, previous to his home-coming, inquires of the Shades at the entrance to Hades. It is perhaps curious that Helen is not mentioned here as a daughter of Leda, who is here only introduced as the mother of the Dioscuri.

² In connection herewith we must mention Prudhon's much-admired picture, 'Paris et Hélène réconciliés par Vénus,' in the Louvre. See, about this episode, 'Hélène' in Paul de Saint Victor's *Hommes et Dieux*, 1867, pp. 36-47.

Flaxman treats the subject in two of his fine drawings, 'Venus disguised inviting Helen to the Chamber of Paris,' and Venus (her garment nearly pushed aside) presenting Helen to Paris.

‘IN BREACH OF PLIGHTED FAITH.’

In the fourth and fifth books of the *Iliad* we witness the council of the gods, in which a view unfavourable to the Trojans gains the upper hand. Athena entices Pandarus to break the treaty by wounding Menelaos. The fight becomes general; the gods join in it. The conditions of the duel are, on both sides, forgotten. Then we see the leave-taking of Hector from his wife,¹ but also Paris ready to return to fight, and Helena encouraging him thereto; for, whilst still accusing herself, she would like to be the wife of a valiant man, and, as she says with pain, ‘the heart of Paris is full of change, and always will remain so.’ And thus encouraged, he goes forward to battle, together with Hector, who upholds him.²

¹ ‘Will sich Hector ewig von mir wenden?’ Schiller, *Hector’s adieux*. *Iliad*, vi. 307-517.

² There is a very fine outline, in the Abbade Misserini’s work on Thorwaldsen, of the scene between Hector, Helena and Paris—a bas-relief made by the artist, in 1809 (*Thorwaldsen, Intera collezione*). It appears also in C. A. Rosenberg’s *Thorwaldsen*, Bielefeld, 1896, but the photogravure is inferior to the outline. Dante Gabriel Rossetti made a pen-and-ink sketch of the call of Hector on Paris. It was to serve for a picture which was never made, but an engraving of which is published by Marillier, with the title ‘Cassandra.’ In reality it is a combination of the two passages in book vi. of the *Iliad*,

In the sixth and seventh books the fighting continues. Antenor, the Trojan Prince, advises to give up the cause of war. 'Now,' he says, 'we fight in breach of plighted faith.' But Paris will not permit the return of Helen. He will give back the treasure to Agamemnon, and add to it of his own; the wife he will not restore. The message is sent to the Greeks, but now Diomedes, strong in his conviction that Troy is near her fall, exclaims: 'Let no man accept Paris's substance, neither Helen's self; known it is, even to him that hath no wisdom, how the issues of destruction hang already over the Trojans.'

For our present purpose there is no occasion to follow in their changes the warlike events of the next cantos; in the twenty-fourth and last we receive one more of Homer's pictures of Helen. We come to Hector's death. And perhaps on this occasion, if on no other—for Helen in her life had many occasions for weep-

306-362 and 499-520, to which add vii. 1-6. The picture had better not been called 'Cassandra'; she has really, in Homer, nothing to do with the episode. The painter, perhaps unconsciously, seems influenced by the eleven lines of Shakespeare's 'Troilus and Cressida,' where Cassandra appears 'raving.' *Vide* H. C. Marillier, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: an Illustrated Memorial of his Art and Life* (Macmillan, 2nd edit., 1901).

ing—there arose the plant whose origin was attributed to the tears of Helen, similarly as the origin of the fragrant clove (*clou*) was ascribed to the drops of blood called forth by the nails used at the Crucifixion. That plant was called Helenium (*Thymus incannus*).¹

THE DEATH OF HECTOR.

When things went hard with the Greeks, and Achilles persisted in not coming forward, his friend Patroclus obtained from him the loan of his armour. In it he strikes terror into the Trojans, but is killed by Hector. Then Achilles himself throws away his reserve in order to avenge his friend. He slays Hector. At night Priam goes out to the camp, begs for the restoration of the maimed body, and obtains it for obsequies at home. The wife and the mother address the form of the fallen hero, dirge-like, Helen follows :

“ Hector, of all my brethren, dearest thou ;
The godlike Paris claims me as his wife,
Who brought me hither—would I then had died !

¹ Plinius the Elder, book xxi., chap. 91. Cf., also, xxi. 33. There seems, however, an error in this reference of Littré's as to the latter passage, which speaks throughout of *Brassica-chou* (not *clou*).

But twenty years have passed since here I came,
 And left my native land ; yet ne'er from thee
 I heard one scornful, one degrading word ;
 And when from others I have borne reproach,
 Thy brothers, sisters, or thy brothers' wives,
 Or mother (for thy sire was ever kind,
 E'en as a father), thou hast checked them still
 With tender feeling, and with gentle words.
 For thee I weep, and for myself no less ;
 For, through the breadth of Troy, none love me now,
 None kindly look on me, but all abhor." ¹
 Weeping she spoke, and with her
 Wept the crowd.'

Well says J. Addington Symonds, in his appreciation of the women of Homer, and with reference to this beautiful passage : ' It would have been impossible to enhance more worthily than thus the spirit of courtesy and knightly kindness which was in Hector — qualities in truth which, together with his loyalty to Andromache, endeared the champion of the Trojans to chivalry, and placed Hector, not Achilles, upon the list of worthies beside King Arthur and Godfrey of Boulogne.' ²

¹ Perhaps, better, ' now shudder at me ' (Lord Derby's translation, as before). Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. i., pp. 282, 283, speaking of the poet Stesichorus, says that writer's view is strikingly opposite to the delicacy and respect with which Helena is always handled by Homer, who never admits reproaches against her, except from her own lips.

² John Addington Symonds, *Studies of the Greek Poets*, vol. i., p. 115, 1893.

AFTER HECTOR'S FALL.

We have left Homer's *Iliad* behind us, and now turn again to other sources.

Once more, after Hector's fall, a helping hand is extended to the Trojans. The Amazons, led by their Queen Penthesilea, the daughter of Mars, shake for a while the besiegers. But she falls by the hand of Achilles.¹ Then another force, that of King Memnon, approaches to their aid. Meanwhile their counsels are shaken. Flight from Troy is proposed on the one side; on the other, by Polydamas, the advice is again pressed to give up Helena to the Greeks, together with the treasures she brought from Sparta—nay, with double their value.² But Paris opposes, as he did on a former occasion, successfully. Well is he aware how great is the harm he has brought on his countrymen, but his 'flaming heart' would rather die than be severed from Helen.

Again, when later on Eurypylos the Mysian, a grandson of Herakles, came to the aid of the Trojans, a warm reception was given to him by Paris and Helen, whose beauty bewitches him

¹ A former proposal by Antenor to give Helen back having been refused by Paris (*Iliad*, vii.).

² Quintus Smyrnæus, book i., x. 20-728, and ii. 41-99.

and finally determines him to go into battle, in which he falls. In this whole episode Helen shows herself strongly as one aiding the Trojans; of such ambiguity as, further on, is suggested there is no trace.¹

THE DEATH OF ACHILLES.

It is Paris, the weaker man, who is destined by fate to overcome the victorious Achilles. His arrow, perhaps treacherously, pierces the heel of the bravest of the Greeks. And, not without reference to our Helen, says the poet Ovid :

‘ Was this thy fee,
Achilles, victor of a thousand fields?
This coward chief that stole a Grecian wife,
Thy conqueror? If the Fates thy fall ordained
To hand so like a woman’s, better far
Penthesilea’s Amazonian axe
Long since had by Thermodon laid thee low.’²

According to Quintus Smyrnæus, Achilles was not killed by Paris; his wound was caused by the arrow of Apollo himself, he having in vain exhorted the enraged Achilles to cease fighting the Trojans.³

¹ Quintus, vi. 143-160, and 197 *et seq.*

² Henry King’s translation of the *Metamorphoses*, Blackwood, 1891.

³ Quintus, iii. 30-178. A middle term is found by Hyginus (*temp.* Cæsar), who affirms that Apollo for this feat assumed the appearance of Paris (*Fabularium*, liber x.).

In the 'Nostoi,' one of the Cyclic poems, it is related that Thetis snatches her son's body from the funeral pyre, and takes it to the isle of Leuke in the Pontus, of which we shall hear more.

Let me remind the reader here that we have by Goethe a long poem, or the beginning of a long poem, on Achilles.¹ If he had finished the beautiful fragment, would our Helena have appeared there? Would Euphorion have been foreshadowed there already, for whom we have now to wait till the third act of the second *Faust*?

Landor, however, as mentioned before,² had the idea of bringing Achilles and Helen together, just before the fall of Troy, in one of his immortal prose-poems, at the very time when Goethe shows us the son of Thetis preparing, in the feeling of death approaching, that gigantic cairn under which his body, together with that of his friend Patroclus, is to rest, and which is to become a helpful landmark to the shippers from East and West.

That cairn, if ever completed, has no longer

¹ We had, in the English Goethe Society, a paper on the *Achilleis*, a few years ago, by Mr. Alexander Rogers.

² See pp. 19, 20, 'Achilles,' note ⁵.

to fulfil such an office. But the hero Achilles has not remained without a memorial. It was erected in our days by an ill-fated and much-to-be-pitied Empress. ‘Elizabeth of Austria’s favourite talk,’ says a confidante of hers, ‘and her thoughts were always bent on discovering the hidden tragedy of existence, and comparing it to the tales and myths bequeathed to us by antiquity. When her wounded soul tried to seek consolation after her son’s death, she found comfort in Homer’s rhapsodies, and, remembering Thetis and her grief when her heroic son was killed, she built at Corfu the famous Achilleion, and spent her time among the roses and statues of the Greek gardens that overlook the sea.¹ Thus she will remain linked to the glorious remembrances she so well understood and cherished.’²

THE DEATH OF PARIS AND OF CENONE.

So Paris was victor, after all. But not long was his triumph to last.³ On the way to Troy the Greeks had left behind them Philoctetes on

¹ At Corfu.

² Hélène Vacaresco, in the *Contemporary Review*, August, 1902, p. 177.

³ The Ancients had, and Pliny still knew, a statue, by Euphramus, of Alexandros - Paris which was esteemed,

a lonely island.¹ This earliest Robinson Crusoe possessed the poisoned arrows of Hercules, and now the Greeks before the apparently unconquerable city, and deprived of their best man, Achilles, sent for the one they had abandoned. With one of these arrows he mortally wounds Paris.² No healing is possible unless by the art and goodwill of that Ænone whom he had loved for her own sake and had abandoned for Helena. He has himself borne up into Mount Ida. But Ænone, having the means of healing, refuses to apply them. Shall she cure her faithless lover that he may continue to love Helen? No. In vain Paris beseeches her, lovingly.³ Then, being borne back valleywards, rejected by Ænone, his heart turns once more to Helen, who, however, does not behold him again. Let me quote from William Morris's beautiful poem 'The Death of Paris,' in *The Earthly Paradise*:

‘Then, as a man who in a failing fight
For a last onset gathers suddenly
All soul and strength, he faced the summer light,

says he, because one recognised there the judge of the goddesses, the lovers of Helena, and the murderer of Achilles (Plinius, xxxiv.).

¹ Quintus Smyrnæus, ix. 328-541.

² *Ibid.*, x. 209-246, and 254, 255.

³ *Ibid.*, x. 260-329.

And from his lips broke forth a mighty cry
Of "Helen, Helen, Helen!"—yet the sky
Changed not above his cast-back golden head,
And merry was the world though he was dead.'

But with C  none, too, deep regret rapidly sets in. She escapes from her father's home, hastens at night after the bearers. The pyre is already lighted by the oldest of the shepherds, who is the same that found the child Paris when exposed in the woods. She throws herself upon it—is consumed. The ashes of both were collected in one golden vase.¹

Loudly Helen wails before the court, but her mind is full of anxiety for her own coming fate. Deeply wails Hecuba for this loved son. Priam does not yet learn the fatal news. He sits at Hector's grave, preoccupied and weeping.

THE WIDOW HELEN.

The widow Helen, however, finding there were two suitors to her hand in Troy—both sons of Priam—Helenus and Deiphobus, married

¹ So Apollodorus, Parthenius, and Quintus of Smyrna. The latter's recital of the C  none episode is very beautiful (Quintus Smyrn  us, ix.). Other accounts say she hanged herself, or, when the news of Paris's death was brought to her, she fell down dead, and the two lovers were buried in one grave. Landor gives another account still of

the latter.¹ Helenus, the disappointed lover, was a kind of soothsayer ; he gained the friendship of the Greeks. After the fall of Troy, he remained alive, of all the many sons of Priam, established a kingdom in Epirus, and married the twice-widowed Andromache, who had become a slave and unwilling wife of Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles.

The Palladium, a statue of Minerva, considered a tutelary goddess of Ilium, has been stolen, gained by Ulysses and Diomedes, and brought into the Greek camp, but with bloody hands, all the guards slain. In the camp the goddess shows her anger for the insult shown her, her statue being besprinkled with blood. Calchas, the priest, advises the Greeks to return to Greece before they, with renewed sanction, may again assail the tower. The horse is built up, apparently as an atonement for their heavy guilt, yet intentionally too colossal to allow the Trojans to take it into their city as a substitute for the stolen Palladium.²

Paris's and Ænone's death. Deeply moving is Tennyson's 'Death of Ænone,' in the last book of verse he gave, almost from his dying couch, to the world, in 1892.

¹ According to the 'Little Iliad,' one of the Cyclic poems (Welcker, ii., p. 237 *et seq.*).

² Virgil, *Æneid*, ii. 162-184.

THE FALL OF TROY.

Twice more do we find Helen mentioned by Homer, shortly before the fall of the city, but not in the *Iliad*. Much later, when Menelaos,¹ after their long and adventurous home-bound voyage, is settled with his recovered wife at Sparta, she receives, in the dignified position of recognised head of the house, the visit of Telemachos, in search of his father. Having mixed with the wine that magic nepenthe she once received from Polydamna in Egypt, a powerful opiate which stills grief and resentment and the memory of past suffering, she herself tells us how in Troy she was visited secretly by the Greek chief Odysseus,² who, disguised as a beggar, had made his way into the city. Could she betray her countryman to the Trojans? And, on the other hand, could she prevent his finding out how the land lay, and thus become herself an instrument by facilitating the ruin of her Trojan friends?

¹ Quintus Smyrnæus, x. 365, 366.

² *Odyssey*, iv. 239-264.

Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. i., p. 279, seems to go too far in the italicized words of this passage: 'Helen alone recognised him, but she was now anxious to return to Greece, and *even assisted Odysseus in concerting means for the capture of the town.*'

Paris is dead. The position was most embarrassing. It may be mentioned that this is not represented as the secret visit of Odysseus and Diomedes, related in the second book of Virgil, when they stole the Palladium on whose possession the Fates had agreed the preservation of Troy to hang.¹

¹ Apollodorus, Dionysius Halicarnassus (i. 69), and in the second book of the *Æneid*, verse 162 *et seq.* Nothing in Helen's account of her meeting with Odysseus refers to the details given in Virgil. Grote, as above indicated, connects the two accounts (i. 279). They would then be two variants of the same legendary event, and such a view will frequently present itself. According to Dictys (v. 5-13), the theft took place by the Trojan Antenor, who, being hostile to Priam, had entered into peace negotiations with the Greeks. During these Diomedes and Odysseus were his guests, and to these he handed the statue. According to Quintus Smyrnæus (ix. 346-363), it is Helenus who, from jealousy, hands over the statue; he, after Paris's death, having aspired to Helen's hand, angrily saw Deiphobus preferred. It is further noteworthy that Dictys records on this occasion a striking step attributed to Helen. According to him, Odysseus and Diomedes are not smuggling themselves into Troy, they are, openly enough, guests of Antenor, who previously, as head of an anti-Priam party, has visited the Greek camp. There it was agreed to give up Helen and her riches to Menelaos. Then Deiphobus marries Helena, and she goes at night to Antenor's house, and begs him to intercede with the Greeks in her favour. She adds that, since the death of Paris, her residing at Troy had become odious to her, and that she had not ceased to wish to return to the Greeks. On the following morning two Trojan deputies go to the

But if the recollection of that visit was embarrassing, the rôle of Helen in the next adventure is more than that: it is ambiguous. And mark that it is not Helen who relates this detail of her story: Menelaos does, in her presence.

The Wooden Horse has been constructed, and by the beguiled Trojans themselves dragged into the city. It contains in its bowels the Greek chieftains who are to come out in the night and give to the Greeks outside the signal for their irruption. The besieged come, wondering, admiring, believing the horse, if brought into the city, would protect them—perhaps as a substitute for the lost Palladium. Helen comes, too,¹ her new husband, Deiphobus, with her. Three times she walks round the immense horse, calling the names of the Greek leaders—calling them with great skill in imitating the voices of their wives. And they were going to come out, or, by answering, to betray themselves. They are prevented by Odysseus, and thus saved from destruction at the hands of the surrounding Trojans.

Greek camp, whence they return, instructed of the favourable disposition of Helen, accompanied by Odysseus and Diomedes. Dictys is a Cretan, and the reader may remember a certain proverbial expression about those islanders.

¹ Virgil knows nothing of this appearance of Helen.

What was Helena's intention? 'I,' says the poet—not Homer this time, but Lewis Morris¹—

‘I, with a divided heart,
Saw victory incline now here, now there.’

It has to be explained by Menelaos that a god, favourable to the Trojans, must have led her there, and Athena, now favourable to the Greeks, led her away again. That is the convenient explanation Menelaos gives in the presence of Telemachos. And Helen does not answer her husband. Does it not look as if she was not absolutely forgiven, and as if there was still a grudge kept up, on account of double-dealing?²

Gladstone, in his *Homeric Studies*,³ admits the doubtful character of Helen's action on this occasion, but adds: ‘Menelaos, in referring to the incident, carefully spares Helen's feelings

¹ *Epic of Hades*, p. 107.

² Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. i., p. 282, seems to assume too much in saying that ‘Helen gladly resumed her union with Menelaos; she accompanied him back to Sparta, and lived with him there many years in comfort and dignity’; and in this note: ‘Such is the story of the old epic [see *Odyssey*, iv. 560, and the fourth book generally] . . . Polygnotos, in the paintings above alluded to, *follows the same tale*’ (Pausanias, x. 258).

The italicized words of Grote's are *not* borne out by the pictures.

³ Vol. iii., p. 582.

by another of those strokes of exceeding tact and refinement for which Homer's writings are remarkable: "Thither thou camest; and no doubt it was the influence of some celestial being favourable to Troy that prompted thee"—thus preventing, by anticipation, the sting that his account of the matter might carry.'

Does she, by volunteering her own previous statement, mean to weaken beforehand anything that Menelaos might wish to relate to her guest? It remains curious that she should mention—a fact she may have learnt subsequently—that Odysseus, in his retreat, perhaps, killed many Trojans (verse 257). She is careful, too, to observe that she had to take an oath not to mention Odysseus' visit before he could have reached the Greek ships again (verses 253, 254).

It may be worth adding that Demodokos, the minstrel of King Alcinous, referring, in the presence of Odysseus, to the taking of Troy, mentions the horse indeed, and the different views with which the Trojans beheld it, also their fatal decision, but has not a word to say about Helen's bearing on this occasion. Nor does he utter her name, though he speaks of the dwelling of Deiphobus, whither Odysseus hastens with Menelaos.¹

¹ *Odyssey*, viii. 499-520. '

The guests, having heard the statements of husband and wife, forbear all comments, and the 'sensible youth' Telemachos expresses the wish to go to bed, which Helen hastens to get prepared for the two visitors.

ÆNEAS AND HELEN.

Troy has fallen. The Trojans, taken by surprise, are beaten, massacred. Æneas, with a faithful band, has offered resistance so long as possible, but at last—it is again a Roman that speaks now¹—after the killing of Priam :

‘look I around
To see what force remains to me, but all,
Ay, all, worn out with wretchedness, are gone,
And either to the earth have leaped or given
Their miserable bodies to the flames.
And I alone remain. The brilliant light
My paths makes clear, as I descend and gain
The courts below. My eager eyes search out
Whate’er their search may meet, when I observe
In humble attitude hidden in Vesta’s fane,
Silent and secret and avoiding all,
Helen, King Tyndareus’ daughter. There she sat,
At once the Erinnyes of *her* land and ours,
Concealed by shrines which loathed her, and in dread

¹ *Æneid*, ii. Translated by John Augustus Wilstach (Counsellor-at-Law), in two volumes (Boston : Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., 1884), verse 563 *et seq.* Schiller’s translation of canto ii., stanzas 98-106. Compare, also, the translations by Sir Theodore Martin, Conington, and G. Symmons (1820).

Of penalties to come which hunted her
 From Trojans, for their power and city lost,
 And from the Greeks, and from the wrath inflamed
 Of her deserted spouse. My heart flashed fire,
 And sudden rage possessed me to avenge
 My fallen country, and inflict on crime
 Its punishment due. "Shall she secure behold
 The Spartan land and fair Mycene's realms,
 And ride a Queen in solemn triumph borne?
 Shall she her spouse behold, her native land,
 Her children, and her parents, while a crowd
 Of Trojan maids and warriors swell her train¹
 And wait upon her steps? Shall Priam fall
 Beneath the sword? Shall Troy expire in flames,
 And the whole coast be soaked in Trojan blood? . . .
 Not so. . . ."

He is about to rush upon Helen to kill her, but
 Venus appears, the mother of Æneas by the
 mortal Anchises.

'Such things I meditated in my mind
 Enraged, when came (and ne'er before so clear
 To my pleased vision), splendid through the night,
 My mother dear, goddess confessed, as seen
 In spheres above by those who dwell in heaven.'²

¹ Compare the chorus of Trojan maids—or, at any rate, girls—in Goethe's *Helena*, and their nobler leader, Panthalis.

² How beautiful is Dryden's translation of this passage!
 —*Qualisque videri cœlicolis, quanta solet* :

'Never so radiant did her eyes appear;
 Not her own star confessed a light so clear;
 Great in her charms as when, on gods above,
 She looks, and breathes herself into their love.'

She admonishes her son Æneas to save his father, her now aged lover Anchises, his own wife and little son; and Helen's image and crime pass away from his sight. Venus herself has some sort of excuse for Helen and Paris, her old protégés. Not they, though guilty, have caused the fall of Troy: the gods themselves have done it. Neptune, Juno, Pallas, even great Jove himself, are now seen engaged in the work of destruction.

Æneas goes to save his family, the ancestors of Julius Cæsar, and of the Roman poet's patron, Emperor Augustus.

But not yet is Helen's life safe.

MENELAOS AND HELENA.

In another version, that of a Greek this time — Quintus of Smyrna — it is Menelaos who threatens the life of Helen, after killing Deiphobus, not led to him by Helen, as the unsympathetic Latin poet would have it. Demodokos, the minstrel of the Court of King Alkinous, relates that Odysseus hastened with Menelaos to the 'noble Deiphobus' dwelling' (*Odyssey*, viii. 517, 520), and speaks of a terrible fight, but gives none of the horrors with which Virgil regales his Roman readers.

Helen is accused—but by a Roman, Virgil—of having, in that awful night when Ilium

fell, tried to regain the good graces of Menelaos by opening to him the door to the bedroom of Deiphobus, who was killed and horribly mutilated by the vengeful Greek. So Æneas found him when he visited the Inferno, and thus he replied to the Trojan's greeting, who was as yet ignorant of the fate of Deiphobus, to whom he had erected an empty tumulus :

‘ My own hard destiny and the deadly wiles
Of that Lacænian woman, these it was
That overwhelmed me with the wounds you see,—
These the last marks she left me of her love.
You know,—whoever can forget?—how we
Spent that last night in reckless revelry,
When the fell horse our ramparts overleapt,
And hid within it bore a warrior band.
In festal garb disguised, along the streets
She led a troop of Phrygian Bacchanals,
And in their orgies waved a blazing torch
As signal for the Greeks to storm the town.
Worn with anxiety and drowned with sleep,
Upon my ill-starred bed I threw me down,
And o’er me as I lay there stole a sweet
Deep, peaceful slumber, as of death. Meanwhile
My charming spouse of weapons stripped the wall,
Stole from my pillow my true sword, and then
To Menelaos open threw the door,—
A boon, belike, to appease her amorous lord,
And make her past delinquencies forgot.’¹

¹ Virgil, *Æneid*, book vi., Sir Theodore Martin's translation, 1896, pp. 227-230. Cf. also John Conington's translation, 3rd ed., 1870, pp. 195-198. Also that by William Morris, 1876, and G. K. Richards, 1869.

Helen runs away, pursued by Menelaos—it is like a scene in Maeterlinck's *Pelias and Melisande*—and he is about to kill her, when his milder brother Agamemnon intercedes.¹

The chest of Cypselos was the name of an ancient coffer in cedar-wood, a work of the seventh century B.C. Cypselos became Tyrant of Corinth, and the Cypselides, his descendants, consecrated this coffer to Zeus at Olympia, where it was preserved and seen by Pausanias.² On one of the bands, of cedar or of ivory, was represented 'Menelaos, with a sword in his hand, rushing on to kill Helen'—clearly at the sacking of Ilium.

A vase shows us Aphrodite disarming the wrath of Menelaos by withdrawing the veil from the beautiful face of Helen.³

Another vase is mentioned and figured by Panofka,⁴ where Helen, fully dressed, causes the enraged Menelaos to drop his sword. Panofka, in the German edition,⁵ says that Menelaos is 'disarmed by the entreaties of the once beloved one.' But this seems not well observed. To me

¹ Menelaos finding Helen, threatening her, and Agamemnon interceding, in Quintus Smyrnæus, *Posthomerica*, xiii. 359 and 388-418.

² Pausanias, v. 17, 18.

³ Andrew Lang, *Helen of Troy*, p. 189.

⁴ *Manners and Customs of the Greeks*, London, 1849.

⁵ *Griechen und Griechinnen, nach Antiken*.

it appears that her hand is rather warningly raised, and the gesture is not that of entreaty.

One of the three so-called 'Mirrors of Helen'¹ in the British Museum shows again the intervention of Aphrodite against the raging husband at the shrine of Minerva. Unfortunately, Helen's face is here no longer clear. Only Minerva's is very clear, that of Menelaos tolerably so.

By none of these testimonies is a clue offered to make it clear how Menelaos passes from a raging desire to kill Helen (of which so much remains in the beginning of Goethe's *Helena*) to his absolute complacency as shown in the *Odyssey*. Homer does not tell.

Only Walter Savage Landor does, in the *Hellenics*.² Here Helen is pursued by Mene-

¹ Larousse mentions one 'Mirror of Venus' as being in the British Museum. I find three:

(a) Betrothal of Helen and Menelaos. Helen distinctly ugly and almost clumsily drawn, Menelaos somewhat better. Is this a caricature?

(b) Helen's toilette, attended by the three Graces, superintended by Venus, a fat woman. Only the lower part of Helen's face is seen: strong straight nose, strong chin.

(c) Menelaos threatening Helen at the shrine of Minerva, Venus protecting. In parts very indistinct, by destructive effect of age. Helen not clear; head of Menelaos bearded; Minerva clearest. This is the 'Mirror' referred to by Larousse. It does not appear to have been known to Winckelmann.

² Edition of 1846, vol. ii., pp. 483, 484.

laos up the steps of the palace. An old attendant deprecates and momentarily prevents the vengeance being carried out. Nevertheless, Menelaos prepares to kill her, but her sweetness disarms him, and at the end of the scene his love has returned.¹

Anyhow, Helen's life is saved; but she has become a prisoner. And now, in a picture very different from that by the Roman, who shows her so abject, let us see her in what Goethe calls 'The Glorification of Helena.'

THE PICTURES OF POLYGNOTUS.

To the Roman writer, then, Helen had appeared as an accursed monster. Not so to a Greek artist. How considerably — nay, lovingly — Homer treated her image! though he by no means forgets

¹ This comes nearest to the picture on a vase, reproduced by Millin (1759-1818) in *Monuments inédits*, vol. ii., p. 306. Brantôme tells the episode, according to his own manner, with scant sympathy, in his book *Des Dames*: ' . . . comme fit Ménélaus, le pauvre cocu, lequel, l'espace de dix ou douze ans, menassant sa femme Héleine qu'il la tuerait, s'il la tenait jamais, et mesmes lui disait du bas de la muraille en haut; mais, Troye prise, et elle tombée entre ses mains, il fut si ravy de sa beauté qu'il lui pardonna tout, et l'ayma et caressa mieux que jamais' (*Des Dames, Œuvres complètes*, ed. Ludovic Lalanne, Paris, 1864-1882, tome ix., pp. 17, 18).

that upon the Greeks, too, she had brought suffering. Later on we find another artist, Polygnotus, about 450 B.C., distinctly treating her with dignity and as a commanding figure—not after the return to Sparta, where, in the *Odyssey*, we have seen her the respected mistress of the King's house, but much earlier, at a moment scarcely hours, or at the utmost days, after the horror in which she appeared amidst the massacre of the Trojans when Ilion fell.

The pictures of Polygnotus have long disappeared, with many other works of art that were yet extant when, between 160 and 180 A.D., the traveller Pausanias¹ described the artistic beauties of the Hellas of his days. At Delphi there was quite a gallery of his pictures. They fell into three great groups: the storming of Troy; the return of the leaders; the visit of Odysseus to the Lower World. The pictures were, from the description of Pausanias, reproduced by the brothers F. and S. Riepenhausen in 1826 and 1829.² This is the work which

¹ Pausanias, x. 25, 26. The writer also mentions the poem by Lesches—one of the Cyclics—on the destruction of Troy, which must have lain before Polygnotus, and was known to Pausanias himself.

² *Peintures de Polygnote*, Rome, 1826-1829. There is a more recent publication: *Gemälde des Polygnot zu Delphi*, gezeichnet und gestochen nach der Beschreibung

Goethe had before him in speaking of this matter.¹

We turn to the eight pictures which show the preparations for the home voyage of the Greeks, with their booty and prisoners. Four of these pictures may fairly be called ‘The Glorification of Helena.’ Nothing as yet indicates that a reconciliation between her and Menelaos has taken place. It is evident, however, that she is surrounded by sympathy and respect. But let Pausanias speak.

Picture III.

Near Helen stands Briseïs; a little higher, Diomedes and Iphis² together. Both seem to admire Helen’s beauty. Helen herself is seated. Near her stands a young man, probably Eurybates,³ the herald of Odysseus. Helena has two

des Pausanias, Leipzig, C. Hesse, 1885. No reference is made in this edition to the earlier one, nor to Goethe, whose essay on the subject seems unknown to the new editor or publisher. Four pages of text accompany the large engravings, giving the translation of the two chapters from Pausanias, and a reference to Kugler’s *Kunstgeschichte*. The latter (Stuttgart, 1842), pp. 232, 233, cites Goethe.

¹ Goethe, v. 354, 355, Cotta ed., 1855, in 6 vols.

² Which of the different mythological personages of this name?

³ As to Eurybates, Pausanias was a little more vague than Goethe’s translation: τὸν Ὀδυσσέως εἶναι κήρυκα εἰκαζόμεν.

women near her—Panthalis¹ and Electra: the former stands by her side; the latter ties her sandals.

Picture IV.

Somewhat higher stands a man, clothed in purple, very sad-looking; it is Helenus,² a son of Priam. Beside him stands Meges,³ with his arm wounded. Next this one is Lykomedes, wounded in the wrist, the head, and the heel. (All these figures, evidently prisoners of war, are on a stage higher than Helena.)

Picture V.

Beside her we see Aithra,⁴ the mother of Theseus, with the hair of her head shorn, in sign of slavery, and Demophon, the son of Theseus, in a meditative position. Probably he considers how to liberate Aithra. He asked Agamemnon for her freedom, but the latter would not grant it unless Helen herself consented. That is

¹ Here, then, did Goethe find the name of the noble Leader of the Chorus in his play.

² Helena's rejected suitor, after the death of Paris; *vide* p. 59.

³ Meges, grandson of Augas, one of the suitors to Helen, killed the son of Antenor.

⁴ *Vide* p. 30. Also affectionately mentioned in Konrad von Würzburg's long poem, 'E ra, mein liebez Kamerwip,' ed. Keller, p. 262; and at length in Quintus Smyrnæus, xiii. 492-539. |

probably the cause of Eurybates (the herald or messenger above mentioned) standing before Helen to deliver this message (not in vain).¹

Picture VI.

On the same line we see captive Trojan women, exceedingly sad. Amongst them two Princesses, Andromache and Medesikaste, are veiled.² The latter is a natural daughter of Priam.

So far Pausanias.

GOETHE—THE GLORIFICATION OF HELENA.

Now let us listen, even at the price of some little repetition, to Goethe's comment³ on these four pictures, in which Menelaos does *not* appear. 'Here is no longer any question of violence. Wise Nestor, still in his great age characterized as a master of horse-training, stands by the shore, presiding over the embarkation, which requires precaution. Beside him, in three stages, are

¹ Not in vain: ἀποστέλοντι δὲ αὐτῷ κήρυκα ἔδωκεν Ἑλένη τὴν χάριν.

² The unveiled ones may be those less distinguished maidens—or girls—who later on, at Sparta, form the lively and noisy chorus in Goethe and Carlyle.

³ In the essay *Polygnots Gemälde*, p. 357, vol. v., Cotta ed.

crowded Trojan women, prisoners, more or less bewailing their fate. No longer are they, as formerly, distributed in family life by the side of mother, father, brother, husband, but snatched into a troop, like a herd driven into a corner—treated as a multitude. But not only weak women do we see here in debasing captivity; men, too, most gravely wounded, incapable of offering resistance. And all these mental and bodily sufferings—for whose sake are they endured? For the sake of a woman, the symbol of highest beauty.

‘There she sits, served once more as a Queen, surrounded by her maids, admired by a former suitor, respectfully saluted by a herald.

‘This last trait leads us back to her early youth. We are directed to a neighbouring group. Behind Helena stands Aithra, the mother of Theseus, who for Helen’s sake has been languishing for many years already in captivity, and now again finds herself a captive among captives. Her grandson, Demophon, by her side, seems to plan her liberation. Now, if, as the legend informs us, Agamemnon, the all-powerful commander of the Greeks, is not inclined to set Aithra free unless Helen herself consents, the Queen appears here in her highest glory, seeing that amidst the mass of captives

she appears as a Princess on whose word depends the power to bind or loosen.

‘ Everything in which she was wronged has the saddest consequences ; the wrong she herself did is wiped out by her presence.

‘ From early youth an object of admiration and desire, she kindles the most violent passion of a heroic age ; she imposes on her suitors a never-ending fealty, is abducted, married, led away, and reconquered. Even whilst bringing ruin, she fills with ecstasy the youthful and the aged ; she disarms her vengeful husband, and, after having been the aim in a calamitous war, she now appears as the most beautiful gain of the victor, and when only raised above the mass of the dead and the captives she thrones on the apex of her influence. Everything is forgiven and forgotten, for *she* is here again. The living man sees again the living woman, and rejoices in the highest earthly good, the view of a perfect form.

‘ And thus the then contemporary world, and the world of the ages since then, seem to agree with the Shepherd of Mount Ida, who esteemed but little Power and Gold, and even Wisdom, when contrasted with Beauty.’

HOME AGAIN, TRIUMPHANT.

Quintus of Smyrna (of whom more later on) wrote a book on these events, perhaps in the fourth century A.D., but it was for a long time lost. It was discovered only towards the end of the fifteenth century. Its genuineness has never been contested. And it is much superior to Dictys and Dares, who were the chief authorities for things Trojan in the Middle Ages.

According to Dictys (v. 14), Ajax, after the fall of Troy, asks for the death of Helen. But Menelaos, unforgetful of all his love for her, and seconded by Odysseus, succeeds, by many appeals and prayers, to save her life.

Still, according to Seneca's play,¹ on the ground of a Greek original by Euripides, a grim episode occurred just before the sailing. Helen has to appear as bridesmaid in the horrible ceremony of a mock-marriage of Polyxena,² a daughter of Priam, to the shade of Achilles, on whose cairn she is solemnly sacrificed by his son Pyrrhus (or Neoptolemos) stabbing the bride to death. There are bitter words from Andromache, the wife, and Hecuba, the mother, whose

¹ Seneca's play, *The Troades*.

² Compare, on the death of Polyxena, the *Hellenics* of Landor, 1st ed., 1847, pp. 122-132.

present is like the recent past, terrible, and whose future is to be decided by lot among the victors. Helen's is fixed, and at this moment, at any rate, seems dark enough. She exclaims :¹

‘Andromache weeps for Hector openly ;
Hecuba weeps for Priam ; I alone
In secret weep for Paris.

* * * * *

My master drags me hence, without the chance
Of lot. Was I the bringer of this war ?
Of so great Teucrian carnage ? I think this true
If first a Spartan keel thy waters cut,
But if of Phrygian wars I am the prey,
By the victorious goddess as a prize
Given for Paris' judgment, pardon me !

* * * * *

An angry judge awaits me, and my cause
Is left to Menelaos.'

Talthybius, the messenger, or officer from the Greek camp, interrupts the bitter contest, and ends the play :

‘Ye captive women, seek with speed
The sea ; the sails are filled, the vessels move.’²

¹ In Miss Ella Isabel Harris's translation (Boston, U.S.A., 1898).

There may also be compared one by Watson Bradshaw, 1902, and one by S. P. (probably the oldest, 1660).

² In Mr. Bradshaw's translation : ‘Now, captives, look out to embark on the briny deep with quickened steps ; the vessels are now loosening sails, and the foremost ships of the fleet are already under way.’ Whilst these pages are passing through the press, a new English translation of the

Helen, Quintus relates, marched with the captive Trojan women towards the beautiful Greek vessels. She was at first afraid of insult by the Greeks, but, all around the troops were dazzled by her faultless beauty, and no one dared to say anything unpleasant before her face or behind her back. All looked upon her with delight.¹

A beautiful antique bas-relief in the Campana Museum showed, in accordance with Quintus, Helena entering Sparta on her chariot, with Menelaos—not as a captive woman, but triumphantly, with firm aspect, proud bearing, holding with a royal gesture the reins of her four-in-hand (*quadriga*).

Ten years have passed in the siege of Troy, eight or nine in the preparation for that siege and in fruitless negotiation. The city taken, Helen has returned with Menelaos to Lacedæmon. But they do not reach home immediately. In the eighth year only, after many wanderings, Menelaos comes to Sparta. No words

play of Euripides, by Professor Murray, comes to hand, '*The Trojan Women*. Translated into English rhyming verse by Gilbert Murray, LL.D.' (G. Allen).

¹ J. A. Symonds says: 'Down to the ships she comes with Menelaos, *hand in hand*.' This is saying too much. She walks behind Menelaos, and the complete reconciliation comes a little later, just before sailing (Quintus, xiv. 149-178).

in Homer saying that Helen is all the while with him ; in the *Odyssey*,¹ he relates his adventures and visits to Cyprus, Phœnicia, Egypt, Libya, and the Ethiopians.

Later legends about Helen have, after all, a tragic ending. She was near forty-five when Troy fell. She was then the *femme de quarante ans*—still beautiful. She was full of grace and dignity, a little later on, when she again presided in the house of Menelaos, and Telemachus came there in search of his father.² The scene of leave-taking is full of charm ; she has still her golden locks, her rosy cheeks. Ænone long ago had said bitterly to Paris : ‘ She is reported never to age ’ (Quintus, x. 312). Helena, as well as Menelaos, give costly presents : a precious mantle, woven by her own hands, to her belongs the favourable explanation of an omen that to other witnesses appeared doubtful.³ Homer gives a striking and pleasing picture of comfort and matrimonial *entente cordiale*. A modern poet,

¹ *Odyssey*, iv. 81 *et seq.* ; also xv. 112-118.

² It is on this occasion that Homer mentions the possession by Helen of the nepenthe (*Odyssey*, iv. 227, 228), which she had received from the Egyptian Queen, and which procured the oblivion of all grief and of its causes. You will recollect the mention of this nepenthe by Edgar Allen Poe in ‘ The Raven.’

³ *Odyssey*, xv. 117, 162.

peering into the inner life of the woman so situated, after so many and such experiences, lends her these words :

‘ I lived a Queen long time, and because wealth
And high abundance can make sweet our days
When youth’s swift joy is passed, I did requite
With what I might—not love—the kindly care
Of him I loved not ; pomp and robes of price
And chariots held me.’¹

HELEN’S TRAGIC END.

At last Menelaos died. She aged. The English poet Thomas Heywood² makes her send Hermione, her daughter, for a looking-glass ; and when this is brought, and she finds herself no longer beautiful, and not wishing to outlive her loveliness, she kills herself.³

Different, but surely not less tragic, is the catastrophe as it appeared to the later Greek, Pausanias. He relates, and in that beautiful *Epic of Hades* the English poet adopts the sad story.

¹ Sir Lewis Morris, *Epic of Hades*, p. 117.

² Began to write in 1598 ; died about 1641.

³ Last scene of ‘ The Second Part of Heywood’s *Iron Age*, vol. iii., pp. 429, 430, now first collected, with Illustrative Notes and a Memoir of the Author.’ In 6 vols., London, 1874, John Pearson.

Megapenthes and Nikostratos,¹ sons of Menelaos by another woman, rose in insurrection against Queen Helen, drove out their step-mother. No doubt, whilst committing their new wrong, they pleaded to themselves, in justification, her old wrongs. She fled to a friend of her youth, Polyxo, in the Isle of Rhodes. But this ruler of Rhodos,² who had lost a husband in the siege of Troy, was angered against her, the cause of the war ; gave her indeed hospitality first, then death. The hostess—or her maids, disguised as Furies—fell upon Helen in her bath. Then she was hanged on a tree. Hence her by-name, Dendritis.³ In Schiller's words :

‘ Das ist das Loos des Schönen auf der Erde.’

The mist of uncertainty, then, spreads over this end of Helen, as over much of her life. For others say she and Menelaos were killed in Tauris. And another version still is given by Euripides, in his play of *Orestes*: When Orestes and his friend Pylades were on the point of killing Helena, Phœbus-Apollo—as a last tribute to the glory of her beauty—placed her among the stars.

¹ Pausanias, iii. 19.

² Tlepolemos (Pausanias, iii. 19).

³ Δένδρον, a tree.

A MYTH ONLY ?

Was Helena originally a moon-goddess? Creutzer, in the once well-known book *Symbols and Mythology*, calls her a *Mondsfrau*,¹ and in another place says she belongs to the religion of the moon-worshippers.² Was she a myth only? was there never a personal existence of a Helen of Troy, the wife and sister-in-law of Menelaos and Agamemnon, the sons of Atreus? Is Helena = Selene, length and shortness of vowels notwithstanding?³ 'But such magic figures,' says Niebuhr, 'are different from dreams, and not without a hidden ground of real truth.'

¹ *Symbolik und Mythologie*, vol. i., p. 343.

² *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 458.

³ The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., says it is most probable that the word ἐλένη, an epithet of the moon or moon-goddesses, is connected with the [Sanskrit] root *svar*, to shine. Which does not seem to help us much, as Helena certainly shone as much or more than many persons called *illustrious*, even when they are not shining lights.

Compare also W. F. Roscher, *Ueber Selene und Verwandtes*, in his *Studien*, iv. 146. The author does not deal as specially with Helena as he does with others, with those who are related to Artemis or Hecate, the moon-goddesses. To the former he attaches Kallisto, Atalanta, Iphigenia; to the latter, Medea and Circe. He adds: 'Probably there was also an Aphrodite class of Lunar heroines—*e.g.*, Helena and Phædra.' On p. 6 he mentions a Spartan legend, according to which the egg from which Helen sprang had fallen from the moon.

And in another place: 'Mythical the Trojan War was, no doubt—so much so that not a single point of its events can, by its greater or less probability, be distinguished from others; none the less, a historical groundwork is undeniable, and it is even less hidden than in many other poetical legends. The Atrides, for instance, as rulers of the Peloponnesus are not to be doubted.'¹

To which, perhaps, one may add: And is the existence of a King Arthur, which even Milton doubted, of Charlemagne, of Romulus, of a William Tell, to be denied, on the strength of the legendary inventions which have gathered round their names—the search for the Graal, Arthur's taking of Paris and Rome, Charlemagne's expedition into Palestine, or Gessler's hat?

It is, perhaps, enough to have touched on the point. There was a time, not long ago, when all mythological legends, however man-like or woman-like their personages appeared, had to be dissolved, by clever interpreters, into Sun, Moon and Dawn.

¹ Niebuhr: *Römische Geschichte*, 1811, vol. i., pp. 126, 149.

IN ANCIENT INDIA.

Max Müller held that the Indian Sarama, the Dawn-goddess of the Rig-Veda, is the counterpart of the Helena of the Greeks. Sarama goes to the Belu, or fortress of the Panis, or powers of darkness, to recover the red cattle, which are supposed to be the rays of light. She declares herself to be the messenger of the irresistible god Indra. The Panis tempt her; she shall be their sister, shall stay with them, have a share of the cattle. But in vain, and she recovers the cattle.¹

Etymologically the identification of Sarama (or Saramya) with Helena, and that of Ushas with the Eos of the rosy fingers, of Brisaya with Briseïs, of Dahana with Daphne, etc., offers little, if any, difficulty. But how different the rôles assigned to the actors! In the Indian myth it would be Helena who is in search of what was stolen, and is successful in the end; the Panis hold the fortress and are by her overcome. The points of variance are surely as great as those of coincidence, to say the least.

If a common origin lies at the base of both *Iliad* and Rig-Veda, an immense space of time must have elapsed before such great divergen-

¹ Rig-Veda, book x., hymn 108, verses 1-10.

cies, in India and Greece, could have come from the same germ, and even the traditional date of the siege of Troy, about 1200 A.D., would seem to indicate an enormous rapidity of development if the age of the Rig-Veda be accepted as lying somewhat before 1500 A.D. The story of the siege of Troy would then seem, by Max Müller's theory, a development of the Vedic myth of the 'daily siege of the East by the solar powers.'

To this matter our attention was strongly attracted by my learned friend, Mr. Romesh Dutt, who may, perhaps, in another place return to it.

AMONG THE MONGOLS.

An Austrian scholar, Dr. Jülg, Professor at the University of Innsbruck, has found a curious reflex of our Helena story among the Mongols. In their great (or perhaps only long) heroic poem, the Deeds of Bogda Gesser Chan, he finds unexpected parallels both to *Ilias* and *Odyssey*. Their Helen is called Bogmo Goa; there is wooing and rape, fight of the contending lovers with their friends for nine years, and again nine years are consumed in the return from the war.¹

¹ *Verhandlungen der 26sten Versammlung deutscher Philologen*, etc., Leipzig, Teubner, 1869, pp. 58-71. In the British Museum Library.

MORE THEORIES AND A PERSONALITY.

It will, perhaps, be sufficient that we just mention another learned theory, developed in an essay, *De Helena deâ*, in which, with a great mass of speculative learning, Helena's mother, Leda, is not only identified with Leta or Latona, the mother of Diana and Apollo, but with Venus-Aphrodite herself. Nemesis being the mother, Leda becomes only the nurse of Helena. Leda is, moreover, identified with Astarte, not to mention her niece, or granddaughter, Iphigenia, the whole being perhaps bewildering enough.¹

Or, again, is she a reproduction of the Indian Maja, who by her arts deceives everyone? Be this as it may, Helena, even if personified out of whatever naïve observation of elemental natural events, stands before us now as a person: not fixed in the straight lines of one of the historical personages of these latter centuries of memoirs, chronicles, and gazettes, yet as one who, more than a mere abstraction, appeals to the poets and to us as one having lived and loved—firmly statuesque on the one hand, and yet passing, on the other, into various forms and aspects, like

¹ *De Helena deâ*, von Th. Heincke. Programm des Königlichen Katholischen Gymnasiums, Hechingen bei Sigmaringen. Sigmaringen, 1863.

the rosy or fierce clouds accompanying the rise or setting of the sun ; somewhat like the fiery Brunhild and the innocent Dornröschen (the Sleeping Beauty—*la Belle au Bois dormant*) who are but one and the same person, as the *Märchen*-creating fancy of unconscious artistic ages forms the plastic element into new, sometimes even contradictory phenomena.

So let her live with us—as a personality, not an abstract ; so, perhaps, let her love on and be loved by us, not as one perfect, but as one to whom much may be forgiven, seeing she has loved much.¹

THE CHARMS OF HELENA.

Helen is said to have cast a charm on every man by means of love-philters which she received from the wise Polydamna in Egypt. And her bewitching power extended even to her personal belongings. When the Phocians sacked the treasury of the Delphian Oracle, 357 B.C., the wife of one of their captains took and wore Helen's necklace, whereupon she came to dote on a young Epirote soldier and eloped with him.²

Before parting from her, would one not like to have a satisfactory portrait ? An authentic one is, of course, beyond one's hopes. Still, one

¹ St. Luke vii. 47.

² Symonds, ii. 73, 74.

at least presents itself with much confidence as such, whilst the acceptance of any of the various ones will partly depend on the beholder's conception of her character.

Dares the Phrygian,¹ who probably followed a current tradition, describes her two brothers and herself in one picture. 'Their likeness was perfect. They had fair hair, large eyes, a white complexion, and were tall. Helen, like them, was beautiful, of a gentle mind, sweet disposition, well grown, with shapely limbs ; she had a mark, or mole, between the two eyebrows, and a very small mouth.' Dares did not know, or had nothing to say about, the colour of her eyes. Boito says they were brown, and he should know, he loved her so much. 'Those brown eyes,' reports the poet-musician, 'were gentle as the moon and ardent as the sun' (*vaga com la luna, ardente come il sole*).

On the occasion of her marriage with Menelaos, Lander speaks of her 'rosebud face,' and the girls, addressing Menelaos, sing of

'Helen, in whose eyes
The loves for ever play.'

¹ Chapter 12 of his account of the Trojan War (*De exidio Trojæ*). The work presents itself as translated from a Greek original, by Cornelius Nepos, with a dedication to Sallust. Its real age is not ascertained.

In a description of a woman who was supposed to realize the traditional idea of Helena, the mass of golden hair, large eyes, and warm expression are mentioned. That hair, the forerunner, as it were, of that of the daughters of Titian, is well attested by the poets. Pindar's tribute has already been mentioned. Landor, not a mean authority where woman's beauty—or, indeed, any kind of beauty—is in question, speaks, in *Achilles and Helena*, of her 'golden hair,' and in his *Hellenics* he makes the grim Menelaos, on her murder intent, say: 'How glossy is that yellow braid my grasp seized and let loose!' It was not only glossy, but also perfumed. Menelaos threatens to 'toss it and its odours to the dust and flames.' Perfumes were not the only artificial means by which she cultivated her natural beauty. We are informed by Pliny—who had an eye to so many things—that Helen possessed a cosmetic with which she combated *des ans l'irréparable outrage*.¹ It was an extract or decoction of *Thymus incannus*, called by the Ancients helenium, as mentioned before.²

¹ Racine, *Athalie*.

² *Vide* p. 81. 'It had the force in its sweet taste to augment and preserve the beauty of women, both for the face and other parts of the body. This plant was considered to bestow gracefulness and attractiveness to those who used it, and when mixed with wine it would call

At Lindos, in the isle of Rhodos, she made to a temple a present in the shape of a beautiful bowl of amber : she had it fashioned from her breast.¹

Rossetti, in his *Ballad of Troy Town*, refers to this cup, thus :

‘ Helen knelt at Venus’ shrine
 (O Troy Town !),
 Saying, “ A little gift is mine,
 A little gift for a heart’s desire.
 Hear me speak and make me a sign !
 (O Troy’s down !
 Tall Troy’s on fire !)
 Look, I bring thee a carven cup,
 (O Troy Town !)
 See it here, as I hold it up,—
 Shaped it is to the heart’s desire,
 Fit to fill when the gods would sup,
 (O Troy’s down !
 Tall Troy’s on fire !)
 It was moulded like my breast.” ’²

Some of the finery, it would seem, she had to leave behind her at Troy ; and have we not seen

forth gaiety, and produce the same effect as that nepenthe mentioned above, of dispelling all sad memories (Pliny, xxi. 91).

¹ Pliny, xxxiii. 23. Observe, however, that while we constantly translate *electrum* by amber, Pliny gives that name to a mixture of gold and silver, when the proportion of silver is more than 20 per cent. The temple in question was, according to Pliny, Minerva’s. Brantôme, repeating the story, substitutes Diana, and calls the metal *or blanc* (Œuvres complètes, 1864-1882, vol. ix., p. 255).

² Rossetti, *Ballads and Poems*, 1880.

it? or fancied we saw those pretty things of hers, notably her golden head-gear and other articles, a few years ago, at South Kensington, whither they were brought as a result of the excavations of Dr. Schliemann, that energetic and persevering man?

Some pictures in which Helena figures we have already mentioned. A remarkable drawing of her and Paris, made about 1450 by the Florentine Finiguerra, may be added. It is preserved in the Print Room of the British Museum, with others by the same artist, and reproduced in a sumptuous edition by Mr. Sidney Colvin. The collection contains many remarkable figures in what was once called sacred and profane history, beginning with Adam and Eve, with whom Helen ranks in equal authenticity. Helen and Paris are seen, to the left of the spectator, as they leave a little temple. Paris shows a full profile, from the left—a handsome face, full of admiration for his bride—a tall figure in the dress of the later Middle Ages clinging to him, but showing to us only the back of her head and a portion of what seems a beautiful neck.

Three pictures in the Wallace Collection we have already referred to.

Canova's bust of Helen we should not forget to mention, were it only because it inspired Lord

Byron to write a few verses in its praise. A print of the bust is to be found in the volume *Canova* published by Chatto and Windus, 1876. It does not appear in the beautiful work *Canova: Recueil de statues, etc.* (Rome, 1820), which, on the other hand, contains a splendid statue of Paris with the apple.

Among the Ancients representations of Helena were very frequent. The picture by the celebrated Zeuxis was especially famous. It is a curiously composite representation of complete beauty. The artist collected, from a number of beautiful women at Croton in Magna Græcia, his models, various special features which he welded into one idealized representation of the charms that Helen, as the supreme beauty, ought to have possessed.¹ Ælian, the collector of anecdotes towards the beginning of the third century A.D., adds that Zeuxis made a lot of money by this picture: he charged a fee to each beholder. This then unusual proceeding was the reason of Helen being called a courtesan.²

A story is also told of the same painter acting similarly with a statue of Juno at Agrigentum,

¹ Pliny the elder, xxvi. 36.

² *Histories*, book iv., chap. 12. Abraham Fleming, in his pretty translation, uses a stronger word (*Histories*, London, 1576, pp. 60, 61).

now Girgenti. In another passage Pliny refers¹ to another picture of Helen at Lavinium, a city said to be founded by Æneas, about forty miles from Rome: an Atalanta and Helen, both unclothed, by the same artist.

Brantôme de Bourdeilles, in his pleasant though occasionally loose manner, relating the story of Zeuxis' composite portrait of Helen, observes, as a connoisseur, that, however exceedingly beautiful Helen was, she could not have united all the beauties which those various ladies possessed, and to which the brush of Zeuxis made further additions. This leads him to a curious inventory, communicated to him by the lips of a Spanish lady at Toledo, where they know what beauty is. It appears there are thirty traits or points of beauty.² You will

¹ Pliny, xxxv. 6.

² Francesco Cornigero, a Latin writer of the Middle Ages, counted thirty of them, in sections of three each, and distinctly declared Helen to have possessed them all. Brantôme adds that he had the list from the lips of a Spanish lady at Toledo, 'où il y en a de très-belles et bien gentilles et bien apprises.' He gives her Castilian text, and follows it up with his French translation, 'afin qu'on l'entende:'

'Trois choses blanches : la peau, les dents, et les mains.

Trois noires : les yeux, les sourcils, et les paupières.

Trois rouges : les lèvres, les joues, et les ongles.

Trois longues : le corps, les cheveux, et les mains.

Trois courtes : les dents, les oreilles, et les pieds.

find them referred to in chapter ii. of Prosper Mérimée's tale of *Carmen*, on which the opera by Bizet is founded.

Further on¹ Pliny mentions, in his list of artists in the second rank of excellence, Aristophon, citing a large picture which showed a number of personages, among them Priam, Helen, Credulity, Ulysses, Deiphobus, and Cunning.

Helen, mostly accompanied by others, appears frequently in the wall-paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum, reproduced in the work *Wandgemälde*,² and in Zahn's *Ornamente*, already mentioned.

Trois larges : la poitrine (ou le sein), le front, et l'entresourcil.

Trois étroites : la bouche (l'une et l'autre), la ceinture ou la taille, et l'entrée du pied.

Trois grosses : le bras, la cuisse, et le gras de la jambe.

Trois déliées : les doigts, les cheveux, et les lèvres.

Trois petites : les tetins, le nez, et la teste.'

It, after all, does not make quite thirty, several points being counted twice ; nor does he think that all the points can be there in perfection : 'Il n'est possible.'

Much more absolute is our Latin writer, who was apparently not known to Brantôme, and whose list differs in some details ; he was quite certain Helen had all these beauties.

¹ Pliny, xxxv. 40.

² This splendid work *Wandgemälde* (Berlin, 1839 *et seq.*) recounts from Pompeii and Herculaneum quite a

Rossetti's imagination led him to make a portrait of Helena, which is figured in Marillier's book on the poet, with the observation that the painting itself 'has disappeared, and is now probably in America or Germany.' At a later date he had some thought of doing a picture to illustrate his *Ballad of Troy Town*, which must not be confused with this, the subject being Helen's dedicating to Aphrodite the goblet modelled on her shapely breast. In the picture figured here, except that Rossetti has painted a burning town behind, and that the lady is fingering a crystal locket in which is a flaming torch, there is little to suggest that 'daughter of the gods for whom the towers of Ilium were sacked.'¹

Swinburne has written a glowing description of this Helen.² In the first of two sonnets by Rossetti, Cassandra, the mad daughter of Priam, occupies, indeed, the greatest space; in the second, Hector is favourably, Paris un-

chronicle of the love of Paris and Helena, from the first meeting onward, besides the actual drawings made by the clever artist Tentore, who was obliged to prematurely stop the completion of this great work because he felt his eyesight going.

¹ H. C. Marillier, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti: An Illustrated Memorial of his Art and Life*, 2nd ed., 1901.

Essays and Studies. 1875.

favourably, presented. Venus and the apple are mentioned.

Lord Leighton painted a 'Helena of Troy,' exhibited in 1865, about which we may quote the judgment of a connoisseur: 'In the figure of Helen he dared greatly, but without complete success. It is monumental in height and rigidity, the limbs are cast in a heroic mould, and the general effect of it is impressive and well contrasted with the less dignified attitude and more agitated drapery of her attendants; but her tread is heavy, her drapery encumbers her, both hands are occupied in holding it, and his desire to complete the perfect oval of her face has made him almost denude her head of the glory of her hair.'¹

The late F. Sandys painted two Helenas. One shows the half-figure of the lady looking at the spectator, holding her long and very ample hair in front of her, pressing it with both hands, as in woe. The flames of Troy illumine the background. The other is peculiar, and to some beholders displeasing, but, so it would seem, a legitimate conception, vastly different from being the unwilling instrument of Venus, in the conception of Paul de Saint Victor, and to some

¹ Cosmo Monkhouse, *British Contemporary Artists* (Heinemann, 1901), pp. 110, 111.

extent in the third book of the *Iliad*. She is a Lorelei, rather, hungry for loving victims, and ruining the conquered ones. Luxuriant red hair ; searching, burning eyes.

THE GRAVE—RESURRECTION.

Helen's grave is nowhere shown ; but the influence of her beauty, beneficial after her death, continued. A temple was built and dedicated to her at Therapne in Lacedæmon, and there, says Herodotus,¹ women brought their baby-girls, praying to the divine Helen that she might give them beauty. He then tells a pretty story how an exceedingly ugly child was there so influenced, by the grace of the famous daughter of Zeus, as to grow up into a most beautiful damsel.

Some noble and mystic resurrection was in store for Helen. I have already alluded to it, and we shall have to revert to it further on. Her shade was united to the shade of Achilles

¹ Herodotus, vi. 61. Pausanias (iii. 19) reports that at Therapne Menelaos had a temple, and that it was said he was buried there, together with Helena. But he passes on at once to the Rhodian story, which is contradictory.

—so they are introduced in Bulwer Lytton's 'Bridals in the Spiritland.'¹ Thus in another legend the shade of Achilles was united to that of Iphigenia.²

Helen was to lead a new life, finding resurrection in a distant isle with Achilles, and to them a son was born, Euphorion, whom we shall meet in Goethe's play.

¹ In the *Lost Tales of Miletus*, 1866.

² *Vide* Dr. Garnett's play of *Iphigenia in Delphi*, 1890, a subject which also attracted Goethe at the time of his stay in Italy.

CHAPTER III

THE EGYPTIAN VERSION

So far our account of Helena has chiefly followed the melodious course of Homer and of those who have succeeded him, or drank at the same sources. But there is a stream branching off at the moment when she leaves her home in Sparta. That is the Egyptian version, according to which Helen never went to Troy.¹ Herodotus, about 450 B.C., learnt it from the priests in Egypt. He there hears first of a King Proteus—in whom there appears as yet nothing of the characteristics of that sea-god in the *Odyssey*, so ready to change his form and from whose name we have our frequent adjective *protean*. Where that King had resided, at Memphis, Herodotus saw a grove² sacred to the memory of that good

¹ Herodotus, ii. 92 *et seq.* This is what Goethe in his drama refers to in the words of Phorkyas to Helen :

‘But I have heard thou livedst on earth a double life :
In Ilion seen, and all the while in Egypt too.’

² Grove = *temenos*, whence Mommsen derives *templum*, the point where, in the founding of a city, the constructors’

King Proteus, and within, a chapel dedicated to Venus-Aphrodite, surnamed in this instance 'the Stranger.' He conjectures that this byname refers to Helena; that she is the divine beauty revealed to the Egyptians. He has heard that Helen was once at the Court of Proteus. Indeed, he must have recollected, from the *Odyssey*,¹ that Helen had been at some time in Egypt—though there she is reported to have been in company with Menelaos, and on that King's return from Troy. No other temple of Venus-Aphrodite gives her that byname, 'the Stranger.' So, on this hypothesis, the indefatigable explorer Herodotus sets about questioning the priests. They gradually inform him that Alexandros or Paris, after abducting Helen from Sparta, set, indeed, sail for Troy, but contrary winds push his vessel towards Egypt. There, on the shore, is a temple of Hercules. If any slave take refuge there and undergo certain ceremonies, dedicating himself to the god, he has an inviolable right of asylum. The slaves of Paris, perhaps frightened by the long-continued storms, take flight there, and, being ill-

lines, north and south, east and west, *cut* each other, and which is reserved for religion (*Römische Geschichte*, 2nd ed., vol. i., p. 21).

¹ Book iv., 125 *et seq.*, and, again, 227-229.

disposed to their master, publish in the presence of the priests and of the Governor of the province, Thonis,¹ the rape of Helen. The Governor reports to the King.² He is directed to send the stranger to Memphis, where he may state any facts tending to disculpate him of the crime of violating hospitality—viz., that granted by Menelaos to Paris. Thonis obeys, lays an embargo on the ships, arrests Paris, has him conducted with Helen, with the slaves and the purloined treasure, to Memphis. There the King, after careful inquiry, pronounces judgment: Helen to remain in Egypt, also the treasure, until Menelaos himself comes to claim her and them. Paris is saved from death only by the King's unwillingness to kill a foreigner. So far, but no farther, respect for the principle of hospitality protects Paris, but he must leave Egypt within three days.

Herodotus thinks that the Egyptian version was not unknown to Homer, but that he rejected it as being less impressive, or less fit for the purposes of his epic.

Note here that Menelaos' *Homeric* stay in Egypt must be placed in his *home* voyage from

¹ This Thonis, or at any rate a Thonis in Egypt, is mentioned, as well as his spouse Polydamna, by Helen in the *Odyssey* (iv. 228).

² Herodotus, ii. 114.

Troy. That will make it fit in with receiving the presents he and Helen were given in Egypt, and which are recorded in *Odyssey* iv. 15-22, on the occasion of the visit of Telemachos to the Court of Sparta.¹

Herodotus was further told by the priests in Egypt that the Greek legend of Helen being at Troy must be a fable. Menelaos told the priests—this must be on the voyage home—that on arriving before Troy they sent ambassadors to the city, he himself being one of them, to ask for the restitution of Helen and the treasure. The Trojans replied that they had neither; that both were in Egypt² (Paris, on his return, having had to leave Helen in Egypt, could tell them that). The Greeks would not believe, began the siege, took Troy, and—did not find Helen.

¹ Voss, in Note 20 to the *Odyssey*, iv. 228, says: ‘Dies geschah auf der Hinreise nach Troja, als Helena von Paris entführt wurde.’ This particular present came from Polydamna, the wife of Thonis. The other presents (*Odyssey*, iv.) would belong to a later period, when Menelaos was with Helen. Observe, however, that one version transports Helen and Paris by the most direct way from Sparta to Troy. Other traditions (*vide* p. 42) interpose a longer period and rather piratical wanderings. Thus, this earlier appearance of Helen in Egypt may be referred to by her in Menelaos’ hearing. The two traditions seem to touch on this point.

² Herodotus, ii. 118.

Then they sent¹ Menelaos to Proteus in Egypt.² There both Helen—who had been honourably treated—and the treasure were rendered back to him. As successor to Proteus the King, Herodotus mentions Rhampsinite, but Euripides names Theoclymen, a pious ruler, wishing to marry Helen, but, like Thoas in Iphigenia, allowing her to depart. Menelaos himself received substantial proofs of goodwill, which he badly requited. In order to overcome contrary winds, he committed the crime of immolating two Egyptian children. He was pursued, and fled by sea to Libya. The Egyptians knew not whither he went afterwards.

¹ Compare here Euripides' play. In that, however, Menelaos cannot be *sent* to the Egyptian King to get Helen. He is thrown on the Egyptian coast by a storm, and he fancies Helen to be with him; but this *supposed* Helen is only a simulacrum, which disappears when the real Helen is found. Thus the Helena dialogue in Euripides' Egyptian play:

H. . . . I was never at Troy;

A phantom took my place.

M. How could you at the same time be at Troy and here?

H. My name was in several places, not myself.'

² The Proteus of the *Odyssey*, in the report which Menelaos makes to Telemachos, is the changeful sea-god, and is confounded with or obscured from the pious Egyptian King. Or was the latter after his reign changed into the sea-god?

In the *Odyssey*¹ Menelaos says he was detained for some time in Egypt by the gods sending contrary winds in punishment for remissness in making sacrifice. But he is released when, after his interview with the sea-god Proteus, he does make proper sacrifice.

Herodotus is disposed to believe the Egyptian priests, and to disbelieve the presence of Helen in Troy. For assuredly, he says, the Trojans would ultimately not have refused to give her up, when for her sake they suffered so much. To retain her was not in the interest of either Priam or his nearest heir, Hector, Paris being only a younger son; and why should the heir-presumptive support him in wrong-doing, especially when that involved such great loss? ²

Still, whilst this critic does not shrink from undermining so much of Homer, it never occurs to him to doubt the personality of Helen. It remains to mention, as also disbelieving Helen's presence in Troy, a later Greek writer, Lykophron, born in the isle of Eubœa about 270 B.C., but who passed a great or the greater part of his life at the Court of the Græco-Egyptian King Ptolemæus Philadelphus at Alexandria, 285-297 B.C. His long account of the siege of Troy

¹ *Odyssey*, iv. 352, 353, 381, 382, 585, 586.

² Herodotus, ii. 120.

is called *Cassandra* or *Alexandros*. As to Helen, Lykophron admits that Paris carries off Helen from Sparta (verse 86); but he is not to enjoy the fruit of his crime, for Proteus will take her away from him (verse 116), and he has to return into his own country without Helen (verse 139). Lykophron's work was edited in the twelfth century by the learned brothers Tzetses, and was first printed at Venice, 1515.

STESICHORUS AND HELEN.

A very remarkable instance of the conflict between the Egyptian story and that of Troy, and a curious solution thereof, is furnished by the writings and legendary life of the poet Stesichorus. He was born at Himera in Sicily in 638 B.C., and died in 556, which gives him an age of eighty-two years. He was originally called Tisias, and received the name of Stesichorus—leader of the choir—for having made rules for the chorus to sing lyrical poetry. Although a contemporary of Alkaios and Sappho, and ranked among the nine principal Greek lyric poets, not only is there little known of his life, but that little is interwoven with mythological matter, legend and miracle occurring in plain historic time, like St. George aiding on horseback

the Crusaders in the taking of Jerusalem, or the Devil in Luther's life, or the Virgin of Lourdes in our days. He had in several poems occupied himself with Helen,¹ adopting the Troy story, and taken not a very favourable view of the lady, while yet acknowledging the power of her beauty. In his *Fall of Troy*,² still known to Pausanias, the enraged people were about to stone the fatal woman because of their misfortune :

‘ Armed with the stony shower, the desperate crew
Rush headlong to inflict the vengeance due;
In Beauty armed the bright adult'ress stands,
And stones drop harmless from the lifted hands.’³

And in a further poem, not preserved to us, the character of Helen seems to be handled disrespectfully.⁴ Now, with fraternal love, the

¹ *The Remains of Stesichorus* in an English version, by Sir Edward Ffrench Bromhead, Bart., 1849. In the British Museum. No publisher mentioned. The essay seems reprinted from a magazine article. Based on Dr. Kleine's publication (Berlin, 1828).

² Pausanias, book x., chap. 26. In the preceding chapter he has mentioned another *Destruction of Troy* by the poet Lesches, son of Æschylenus, of the town of Pyrrha. The Lesches belong to the Cyclic poems, of which we have spoken before.

³ Compare Sudermann in *Johannes*.

⁴ The Helen poems are

X. *Epithalamium of Helen and Menelaos*. Compare the treatment of the same subject in Theokritus and *Helena's Brautkammerlied* in Arnold Ruge's *Wanderbuch*, pp. 233-236.

heavenly twins, Castor and Pollux, intervened, and struck the poet with blindness for having maligned their good sister.

He repents, consults the oracle of Delphi as to how to cure his blindness, is advised to send a representative to the isle of Leuke, near the delta of the Danube, where Achilles had a temple. There, so he is informed, Achilles lives again, risen from the dead, and with him Helen equally so. From her own lips the messenger brings back the order as to what the poet is to do in order to expiate his calumnious story about Paris and Troy, and to deserve having the punishment taken off again.

It seems worth while to sketch the *Palinody* which closes the poems of Stesichorus.

In stanza 1 the poet himself mourns that the name of Helen has been soiled with shame.

In stanza 2 he relates how he has been struck blind by Castor and Pollux.

XI. *The Fall of Troy.*

XII. *The Return from Troy*, a companion poem to the *Odyssey*.

XIII. *Helen*. Mr. Broomhead seems to think that 'the satirical invective against Helen was probably a poem of lighter nature than the present, more in unison with the *Palinodia*, and forming a sort of first part to that production.

XIV. *Palinodia, or the Recantation of Helena.*

In stanzas 3, 4, 5 he is advised by the oracle of Delphi to seek healing at Leuke, where there are Achilles and Helen. His friend Autoleon, who has also offended, but against the memory of Ajax, goes there, with a commission from Stesichorus, and brings from Helen's own lips— what a heavenly interview !—her decree.

The voyage sketched, we learn that

‘ The desert Leuke next was won,
Sacred to Thetis’ godlike son ;
Shades of Ajaces there were seen,
The less and he of giant mien,
Achilles there, and at his side
The chaste, the lovely Spartan bride.’

Autoleon, in stanza 6 :

‘ He brought a warning back to me :
“ From Helen tell that poetaster
To me he owes the dire disaster ;
He shall recant those calumnies,
And he shall laud me to the skies.” ’

Such, then, is fair Helen's decree to the poet, who acts accordingly (stanza 7) :

“ O Helen ! Queen of Beauty thou,
And faithful to thy marriage vow.” ’

And in stanza 8 :

‘ Blindly I sang : “ With willing heart
Did Helen from her home depart.” ’

In stanza 9 :

‘ ’Tis false ! for *never Dardan oars*
Did Helen bear to Trojan shores.’

In stanza 10 :

‘The faithless Paris put to sea
With a dead Image, shaped like Thee.’

And he concluded by relating that he again regained his eyesight (stanza 11) :

‘The Twins propitious hear the righteous lay :
Again I now behold the Light of Day.’

This, then, is what Goethe refers to vaguely when Phorkyas says to Helen, to weary and confound her :

‘But I have heard thou livedst on earth a double life :
In Ilion seen, and the while in Egypt too.’

And Helen replies :

‘Confound not so the weakness of my weary sense :
Here even [in Sparta], who or what I am, I know it not.’

Phorkyas :

‘Then I have heard how, from the hollow Realm of
Shades,
Achilles, too, did fervently unite himself to thee,
Thy earlier love reclaiming, spite of all Fate’s laws.’

Helen :

‘To him the Vision, I a Vision joined myself.
It was a dream ; the very words may teach us this.
But I am faint, and to myself a Vision grow.’¹

*(Sinks into the arms of one division of the
Chorus.)*²

¹ ‘Ich als Idol ihm dem Idol verband ich mich,
Es war ein Traum, so sagen ja die Worte selbst.
Ich schwinde hin und werde selbst nur ein Idol.’

² Carlyle’s translation.

A similar union of Shades is already mentioned briefly above (p. 100) from Richard Garnett's *Iphigenia in Delphi*. Here Iphigenia's shade is united to that of Achilles, who had been meant to marry her before the departure for Troy.

The *Palinody* must have been very familiar to the contemporaries of Horace, who plainly alludes to it in Epode xvii., verses 42-44 :

‘Infamis Helenæ Castor offensus vice
Fraterque magni Castoris, victi prece
Adempta vati reddidere lumina.’

In (the first) Lord Lytton's translation :

‘Moved by prayer, Castor's self and the twin of great
Castor
Gave back sight to the bard who had Helen defamed.’¹

¹ *Schiller and Horace*, translated by Lord Lytton, 1875. Here is a more recent attempt of conquering these two troublesome lines :

‘Castor, who chafed — indignant-souled at lines Stesichorean
That libelled Helen—chafed the might of Pollux also
—hearkened
To prayer, and straight restored their sight to poet
pupils darkened.’

Arthur S. Way's *The Epodes of Horace*, 1898.

Compare also this more smooth translation by Tarteron :

‘Vous savez que Pollux et Castor son illustre frère,
piqués jusqu'au vif des vers outrageants de Stésichore

Horace imitates, too, scoffingly, the prayer of Stesichorus, but his Canidia is not as gracious and forgiving as Helen.

The Athenian rhetor, Isocrates, 436-338 B.C., in his *Eulogy of Helen*, chap. 28, refers to Stesichorus, to the infliction of blindness, and to the miraculous healing, both by Helen's will and power. In the few lines he devotes to this part of his subject—which is the praise of Helen—he omits entirely the contents of stanzas 8 and 9, in which Stesichorus distinctly denies Helen's having ever gone to Troy.¹

Mahaffy says: 'The *Palinody* of Stesichorus was very celebrated, and is repeatedly alluded to by Plato.² Nevertheless, it seems very bold to transfer to the stage (as Euripides did) the fancy of a few literary men, or in any case to contradict the greatest and the best established of all

contre la fameuse Hélène, furent sensibles au repentir du poète, et lui rendirent par pitié la lumière du jour, qu'ils lui avaient ôtée.'

¹ Clément Tonnerre, *Isocrate*, 1862, tome ii., p. 197.

² Professor Mahaffy might have added a much later author as referring to Stesichorus—viz., Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, 178 A.D.; died about 202—who speaks of him and his *Palinody* as sufficiently known to the public of his time (*Contra Hæreticos*, lib. i., par. 3). Edition Caillau (*Patres Apostolici*); Paris, Mollier, 1842. Translation by Alexander Roberts and W. H. Rombaut; Edinburgh, Clark, 1868.

the popular myths. It is evident that this innovation did not prosper. Isocrates, in his encomium (of Helen), takes no notice of it,¹ and no modern has attempted to reproduce it, except the German Wieland.'

The learned writer has overlooked on this occasion Goethe, who has brought the Shade of Helena (if Shade it was), with her last lover, on the stage. Only he is not called Achilles there, but Faust.

BULWER LYTTON AND HELENA.

Before proceeding to Euripides, the next follower of the Egyptian tradition, let us quote a few verses from a work, already referred to, of Bulwer Lytton, *The Lost Tales of Miletus*, where he introduces Achilles and Helena inhabiting 'the Isle of Happy Souls.'²

' As the vessel touched the shore,
Came the stateliest two, by Hymen
Ever hallowed into one.
As he strode, the forest trembled
To the awe that crown'd his brow ;
As she stepped, the ocean dimpled
To the ray that left her smile. . . '

¹ This is saying too much (*vide* above).

² 'The tales connecting Helena with Achilles, who is clearly a sun-god originally, which are known already to the writer of the Cypriacs, are also very instructive. Over the Black Sea coasts, Achilles and Helena were worshipped as united in the Elysian fields' (*Encycl. Brit.*, 9th ed.).

And further on Achilles himself explains to the amazed travellers that

‘ on the funereal pyre
Earthly sins are purged from glory,
And the Soul is as the Name.
If to her in life was Paris,
If to me in life a slave,
Helen’s mate is here Achilles ;
Mine, the sister of the Stars.
‘ Nought of her survives but beauty ;
Nought of me survives but fame.
Fame and Beauty wed together
In the Isle of Happy Souls.’¹

EURIPIDES.

Euripides (485 or 480 to 408 or 402 B.C.) came more than a hundred years after the death of Stesichorus. He and Herodotus were contemporaries, and he accepted, at least for dramatic purposes, the Egyptian version. It is true he did not do so always, for elsewhere he followed the Homeric tradition, and, more than that, showed himself not very friendly towards Helen. So in his *Orestes*, and in the *Trojan Women*, in which he was followed by the Roman Seneca,² whose drama was so

¹ ‘Bridals in the Spiritland,’ pp. 137, 138, of *Tales of Miletus* (1866).

² *Vide antea*, p. 78. .

popular in the Middle Ages. But in his play of *Helena* he adopted, as I said, the Egyptian version.¹

Not adverse winds, however, bring Helen to Egypt, nor is, as in Herodotus' account, Paris with her. But here Juno—so Helen herself relates to us—displeased at not having conquered the other goddesses in the trial by Paris, resolves to spoil the plan of Venus. 'She,' Helen says herself, 'she spoilt my marriage with Paris, and gave not me, but a phantom,² looking like me, and formed out of æther, to Priam's son, who, misled by illusion, fancied he possessed me. . . . It was my name, not I, that was the price for which the Greeks fought. But I was carried by Mercury-Hermes through the regions of the air, and, veiled in a cloud in Sparta already—for Jupiter was favourable to me—I was set down in the palace of Proteus, the King of Egypt. So long as he lived, I was not troubled by any offer

¹ Mahaffy, *Classical Greek Literature*, vol. i., part ii., p. 128 *et seq.*, is not favourable to Euripides' *Helena*, with the Egyptian form of the legend. Neither was Aristophanes, who ridiculed it, as he ridiculed many other things.

But does not that very disbelief in this particular version imply a general belief in the personality of a real Helena, who had an existence, whilst the exact facts of her life cannot be disentangled from the various accretions of legend?

² εἴδωλον.

of marriage, but now Theoklymen, the pious son of the late King, has taken to be a suitor to my hand. In the meanwhile my unfortunate husband has gathered an army'—she is not aware of the issue of the war—'and inquires about my abduction. Already he has gone to the towers of Ilium, and many warriors have fallen about the waters of Skamandros. I, who have suffered so much, am cursed by the Greeks, because, in their opinion, by treason to my husband, I have lighted so great a flame of war.'

From this exposition we proceed to new facts. A shipwrecked man, who has been in the Trojan War, comes to Egypt, wonders who may be the owner of the palace, and, perceiving Helena, marvels at her appearance, bearing 'the form of that most hateful woman, that deadly beauty, who ruined me, who ruined all the Greeks.' In conversation with him, Helen, who remains as yet unknown to him, asks: 'And the woman from Sparta fell into your hands?' and receives this answer: 'By the hair of her head Menelaos dragged her away.' Which unfair proceeding seems fair evidence of the fact of Helen having been really found at Troy, as well as of the vigorous disposition of her husband Menelaos, the sternness of whom, grown into sullen vindictiveness, survives in Goethe's

drama, but has quite disappeared when, as you recollect,¹ in the fourth canto of the *Odyssey*, Telemachos visits Menelaos and Helen, and finds them constituting a sort of model couple in mutual love, or, at any rate, exhibiting matrimonial esteem.

Helen further inquires of the shipwrecked man whether Menelaos has returned *with* his wife, and receives the answer :

‘He is not at Argos, nor at the banks of the Eurotas.’

After a while, Menelaos himself,² shipwrecked in his turn, arrives in Egypt, too—with him the supposed Helena, the εἶδωλον, the phantasma, νεφέλη, the air-being. He hides her in the recesses of a grotto while he goes to explore the country and gather information. He is told that Helena is with the Royal Family of Egypt; that she got there even before the Greek forces went to sit down before Troy. This is news bewildering to Menelaos.

‘Has someone carried off my wife out of the grotto? Are there two Helens? Is there another Zeus in Egypt?’

¹ *Vide antea.*

² Aristophanes, the outrageous humorist, adopting this Egyptian version, introduces in his *Women’s Meeting* (*Thesmophoriazusaë*) the poet Euripides himself in the character of the shipwrecked Menelaos (Act III.).

But a messenger comes who clears up the riddle. The *Doppelgängerin*, the *idolon* — the gods finding her no longer necessary—has dissolved, and is now more than ever an airy nothing.

All can end comfortably, Helen's and Menelaos' flight to Greece being helped by the ruse of Helen and the sympathetic help of the King's sister. The young Egyptian King-lover of Helen, angry at first and threatening his sister's life for having favoured the flight of Helen and Menelaos, and not without deep grief, becomes convinced by Helen's divine brothers, the Dioscuri, that the gods have ordered all for the best, and the piece closes happily with the praise of Helena. The young disenchanted King, however, shows hardly so favourably as does, in Goethe's *Iphigenia*, the old King Thoas, disarmed and softened by the nobly warm words of Iphigenia, in his gravely kind farewell to the departing couple.

APOLLONIUS OF TYANA AND DION.

That the Egyptian version was not extinguished by the brilliancy of the Homeric one we have already seen in Horace's allusion to the

Palinody of Stesichorus. But here is a still later proof.

Apollonius of Tyana, who was a contemporary of St. Paul, and died at a great age about the year 100 A.D., gives to the Egyptian legend a testimony which will recommend itself to those of my readers who are theosophically inclined, and perhaps also to others. He performed miracles, or what seemed such, and called 'spirits from the vasty deep.' What is more, differing in this from Shakespeare's Owen Glendower,¹ he succeeded: the spirits came. The ghost of Achilles, near his tumulus, then still recognisable, engaged to answer five questions to be put by Apollonius.

'Did Helen really go to Troy?' asked the medium, apparently predisposed in favour of the Egyptian legend.

'No such thing,' answered Achilles; 'she remained in Egypt, and the leaders of the Greeks were quite aware of it. But we fought for fame and for the riches of Priam.'²

Dion Chrysostomos, in the time of the Emperor Trajan, goes a step farther: it is his cue to assure his neighbours, the inhabitants of a

¹ Shakespeare, *Henry IV.*, Part I., I.

² J. Addington Symonds, *Greek Poets*, vol. ii., p. 87; *Sketches and Studies*, 3rd series, p. 216, 1898.

later Troy, situated a little distance off, that Priam's Ilium was never destroyed by Agamemnon and his men,¹ who, on the contrary, were glad to go home again, like whipped dogs. How it must have pleased the respectable and patriotic citizens of the provincial townlet to be allowed to think that other people of the same name, and living once not far from them, had tired out the onset of the Greeks and driven them back! And to hold fast such a belief, Chrysostom would add, not quite unwisely, was so much better and more comfortable² than admiring those same

¹ Strabo (contemporary of Augustus and Tiberius, died about 25 A.D.) on 'the present site of Ilium'—*i.e.*, on Troy or the city or cities of Ilium which existed on or near the locality of ancient Troy, and were favoured, as Troy, by Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar' (book xiii., chap. 1, pars. 25-45, more especially 38)—'no trace of the ancient city remains.' In 40: 'The present Ilienses affirm that the city was not entirely demolished when it was taken by the Achæians, nor was it at any time wholly deserted.'

Compare here Ernst Curtius, *History of Greece* (translated by A. W. Ward, 1868), who says: 'The sons of the Achæians, who cast down the kingdom of Priam, really remained in the land and built a new Æolic Ilium below Pergamus, the fatal city, on the actual site of which they feared to build.' The Trojan War is, for Curtius, a moment in the course of a great movement of emigration, and he passes lightly over it.

² 'Quando igitur præstabilius erat Græcis, hæc nunquam evenisse, quam captam esse Troiam.'

Greeks for having been the ruthless savages they proved themselves, in the ferocious crimes committed in the night of Ilium's fall, when Priam was murdered at the altar, and Cassandra fell, by the statue of her goddess, a victim to grim Ajax.¹

Dion is very positive in his assertions, for which he has the, to him, weighty authority of an Egyptian priest of the town of Anuphis. This man and his cotemporaries looked upon the Troy adventures, in comparison with the traditions of their own country, as almost recent events. And they were sure they had received such weighty authority ! For it was from Menelaos' lips that the Egyptian priests had the facts. On returning from Troy he did not go home to Sparta, but landed in Egypt, and there married a King's daughter. As to Helen, she had never been his wife ; there was consequently no rape. Paris had landed in Lacædemon with a full retinue and very ample treasure. He had, in his open

¹ *Homerus confutatus a Dione Chrysostomo . . . in oratione de Ilio non capto* [Greek and Latin] a M. Laurentio Rhodomanno (Rostock, 1585).

But Homeric tradition is, against Dion and Rhodemannus, repeated by G. H. Ursinus in *Observationum philologicarum liber unus in quibus, etc. . . . Adjecta est ad calcem libri Oratio de Ilio capto, adversus Dionem illum de Ilio non capto, quæ inscribitur, etc.* (Ratisponæ, 1679).

marriage, the consent of Helen's father and her two brothers. Agamemnon did not care much about his brother Menelaos' rather humiliating position, but the brilliant aspect of Paris and his possible prospects suggested to him the danger of that young and ambitious prince placing himself at the head of the Grecian world. To be beforehand with him, Agamemnon organizes the expedition against Ilium—in reality a vast *razzia*, or meant as such, evoking also the old grief of King Laomedon of Troy, and his alleged wrongs towards Herakles.¹ Things fall out before Troy very differently from what we have learnt by Homer; *e.g.*, it is not Achilles that kills Hector, but the opposite takes place. Ultimately the Greeks leave by treaty, not even succeeding in their endeavour to be bought off handsomely. They return, not in a triumphant mass, but scattered and almost helpless. Priam dies at a happy old age, succeeded by Hector, who conquers nearly all Asia; he, too, reaches a high old age, and leaves the throne to his son Scamandros. 'Such is the real truth of matters.' The Trojans send out successful colonists—Æneas, Helenus, Antenor.

As a variety to these cleverly-presented truthful accounts, the Egyptian priests add that

¹ *Iliad*, book v., verses 626-638.

‘some among us say that Menelaos found Helena in Egypt, which she had never left. Dion also refers to Stesichorus.’¹

CONCLUSION.

Now let us sum up this chapter with one more observation of Goethe's. ‘A human being,’ he says, ‘of an extraordinary type, like a great phenomenon of Nature, remains for ever sacred to the patriotism of any nation. Whether such a phenomenon has been useful or hurtful is a matter disregarded. Every brave Swede honours and admires Charles XII., the most baneful of his Kings. So, too, the memory of his Helena seems to have filled with transport the heart of the Greek. And although now and then a justifiable displeasure about the

¹ Dion's translator, Bretigny, 1752, in an essay as charming as it is curious, hesitates for a while as to the value of Dion's relation, but thinks, after all, it was merely meant as a *jeu d'esprit*. Dion's criticism showing the incredibility of this or that detail in Homer seems acute enough. He evidently knows, or knows of, the Egyptian tragedy of Euripides. As to another of the latter's Helena dramas, he says: ‘A tragic poet represents Orestes as wishing to assassinate Helen, who runs forward to receive the blow of his sword, but Helen's brothers appear.’ Dion seems, then, not to have read the *Orestes* of Euripides, or to have retained but a vague impression of it.

immorality of her doings invented fables opposed to this admiration, showed her to have been maltreated by her husband—nay, makes her suffer the death of abject criminals—yet we find her again, in Homer already, as leading the easy and dignified existence of the honoured wife and directress of her husband's home ; a poet, Stesichorus, is punished by blindness inflicted on him for having spoken of her unworthily. And so, after many years' controversy, Euripides certainly deserved the thanks of all Greece, when he represented her as justified—nay, as completely innocent—thus satisfying the absolute requirement of man in civilization, which is to see Beauty and Morality united in harmonious concord.'¹

¹ Werke, Cotta edition, 1855, vol. v., p. 358.

CHAPTER IV

HELENA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

ALL through the greater part of the Middle Ages, when the turmoil of the invasion of the Roman Empire by the Northern nations had begun to subside, the names of Troy and Helen appeared in literature as well as in legendary lore and fanciful derivation.

The city of Paris—the *Lutetia Parisiorum* of the Romans, so called from a Celtic tribe inhabiting the country thereabouts—was reported to have been built 800 years B.C., in honour of Helen's second husband. Great families of the ancient world liked to link their origin with the champions in or before Troy, and in preference with the Trojans rather than with the Greeks. The Roman antiquary Marcus Terentius Varro,¹ in his book *De Familiis Trojanis* refers to Ilium no less than fifty great Roman houses.² A complacent genealogist of

¹ 116 to 27 B.C.

² W. Roscher, *Politik*, 1892, p. 643.

the family of Julius Cæsar traced their origin back to Æneas, the Trojan founder of Alba Longa, the mother of Rome. 'The noble Britons,' says Spenser, in the *Faerie Queen*, 'sprang from Trojan bold.'¹ And so we learn that Brute, the son of Antenor, conquered Albion the King, made prisoners his two brothers, Gog and Magog—our old friends at the Guildhall—and founded the town of Troy Novant, or New Troy, later on called Lud's Town, from a subsequent King, and ultimately London.²

Thus, three great cities and seats of civilization—Rome, Paris, London—have been connected by popular tradition with that Troy and with the friends of our Helena.

How much the tradition of Ilium continued to live in the minds of the people of the Middle Ages is also illustrated by a curious perversion which Gibbon relates.³ He cites a late Greek writer, Chalcocondyles,⁴ to whom it had become evident that, if in 1453 A.D. the Greek city of Constantinople was sacked by Asiatics, it was in

¹ Book iii., canto 9, stanza 36, and, again, stanzas 44-46.

² *Vide* Caxton. The story is retold, with perfect naïveté, anonymously in 1845. Publisher: Caleb Conolly, Dublin.

³ *Decline and Fall*, chap. 68, footnote.

⁴ About 1470.

revenge for the ancient calamities of Troy : the grammarians of the fifteenth century were happy to melt down the uncouth appellation of *Turks* into the more classical form of *Teuceri*, meaning Trojans or Phrygians.

THE LEGEND IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

In the literature of modern languages the story of Troy and Helen occupies a large space. For the sources of their knowledge, the writers of the Middle Ages were scarcely indebted to Homer, inaccessible as yet to the West of Europe, whilst Virgil was near to them and greatly cultivated. They principally relied on two other writers, known as Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian, already mentioned above. The former announces himself as having been in the Trojan War itself, as a follower of one of the Greek leaders, Idomeneus, and affirms having kept a sort of diary of the siege, his *Ephe-merides*. The latter appears as a Trojan priest of Neptune-Poseidon. His book exists in Latin only ; the translation from a Greek autograph found at Athens, and since lost, was made, or said to be made, in the time of the Emperor Augustus, by Cornelius Nepos, whose short biographies of Greek and Roman famous men have

been the delight and worry of numberless English and other schoolboys.

Whoever this Dictys and Dares were, they probably handed on older traditions. The inquiry about the authenticity and origin of their books has occupied many a pen, but lies outside our present subject, and we may now only adduce the circumstance that their account reduces the ten years' period of the siege by repeated armistices, of which one lasted for two years, another for three.¹

The great Dante² was not unmindful of the war; he saw Helen and Paris in hell, between Cleopatra and Tristan, and not far from Francesca da Rimini and Paolo.³

Dante's brief and vigorous mention is preceded by a little in that curious book *The Foreign Guest*, by Tomasin, a Germanized Italian, whose book is accessible to you in the publications of the Early English Text Society.⁴ Writing at the beginning of the thirteenth century, he sums up our Helena thus :

¹ Compare Koerting, *Dictys and Dares*, 1874; Jaeckel, *Dares Phrygius and Benoît de Sainte-More* (Breslau, 1875); Gaston Paris, *Romanis*, 1888, 129 *et seq.*

² 1265-1321.

³ *Inferno*, canto 5.

⁴ *The Italian Guest*, Early English Text Society, ed. E. Oswald, p. 118, verses 824-828.

' In Greece over all the lands
 She was a powerful Queen ;
 She had much beauty and little sense.
 Her beauty gained her great shame :
 Beauty without sense is a weak security.'

In the pages of Boccaccio,¹ we find the classic Greek beauty reappearing, not among the clash of arms of the Middle Age knights, but surrounded by the warm atmosphere of luxurious Florence. But her name is not yet Helen. 'In the early morning,' we read in the *Decameron*,² 'the Queen arising and having her company called, they walk, eat, sing canzonettes ; others went to sleep, some sat down at chess, and others at tables,³ and Dianco fell to singing in concert with Lauretta, of Troilus and Cressid.'

This, then, is that Cressida whom you know by Chaucer⁴ and Shakespeare, where you have found her at the side of Helen. Anticipating a little in our chronological march, we find the poet referring to

Her whom, we know well,
 The world's large spaces cannot parallel !⁵

and the great sinner gets caressingly called 'My Nell,' whilst in *As You Like It* the poet, far

¹ 1313-1375.

² VI. 1.

³ Draughts.

⁴ 1328 (?)—1400.

⁵ *Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii.

from the rigour of Dante, yet gently indicates that, on the moral side, some imperfectness may remain to be noted :

‘ Heaven Nature charged
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide enlarged.
Nature presently distilled
Helen’s cheek, but not her heart.’¹

Let us retrace a little our steps to the Middle Ages, where the lead seems to have been taken in these Trojan subjects by the North French trouvère Benoît de Sainte-More,² who finds many successors in English, German and Italian writers, as well as French. Among the Germans active in this direction, the first is, perhaps, Heinrich von Veldeke, whose *Eneit*, or story of the Trojan Æneas, was finished about 1190. Konrad von Würzburg, Rudolf von Ems, and Herbort von Fritzlar followed.³

¹ *As You Like It*, III. i.

² Compare *Benoît de Sainte-More et le Roman de Troie, ou les Métamorphoses d’Homère et de l’épopée Gréco-Latine au moyen âge*, par A. Joly, Professeur de la Faculté des Lettres à Caen. Paris, Libraire Franckh, 1870.

³ *Der altfranzösische Roman von Troie des Benoît de Sainte-More, als Vorbild für die mittelhochdeutschen Dichtungen des Herbort von Fritzlar und des Konrad von Würzburg*, von Clemens Fischer, in *Neuphilologische Studien*, herausgegeben von G. Körting. Zweites Heft,

Among the English writers on these subjects, John Gower¹ is worthy of some distinctive place. In book v. of the *Confessio Amantis* he tells the Helen story, with scant sympathy for the heroine.²

There is also an anonymous book, apparently of the fourteenth century, and but recently discovered and edited, under the name of *The Seege of Troy*.³

But these and other productions are overtopped by the renown of Chaucer, of whom it has been said that 'he alone in his time felt the whole beauty of womanhood.'⁴ His *Troilus and Cressida* is to be bracketed with his contemporary Boccaccio's shorter treatment

pp. 63, 142. Of these, Herbort von Fritzlar's *Liet von Troje* has been edited by Frommann, in 1837, Quedlinburg and Leipzig; Konrad von Würzburg's *Trojanischer Krieg*, in 1858 (Stuttgart), by Adelbert von Keller. Both are enormous performances, ambling on, without a distribution into books or cantos, or any other break, through 18,455 lines of Herbort, and 49,837 of Konrad's short lines of verse.

¹ 1325-1408.

² Gower's English Works, ed. by G. C. Macaulay (Oxford, Clarendon Press), vi. 149-164; and R. Pauli's edition (London, Bell and Daldy, 1857).

³ *The Seege of Troje*, ed. by Wager, New York, 1899.

⁴ Henry Morley, *Sketch of English Literature*, 2nd ed., p. 111.

of the same tale ; for the rest, the great name of Helen appears as 'Eleyne,' *in all her goodly soft wise*, not only in *Troylus and Cryseide*, but also in Chaucer's minor poems, in the *Book of the Duchess*, and in that long portion which Chaucer translates from the French *Romaunt de la Rose*. But still she is not in the group of the nine good women—Cleopatra, Dido, Medea, Lucretia, Ariadne, Philomela, Phyllis, Hypermnestra. And in the Prologue [Text B] she is told :

'Hyde ye your heads, Isoude and Eleyne :
My lady cometh that all this may distayne.'¹

We may pass on to his contemporary and successor, Lydgate, a monk,² perhaps not a very strict monk, whom we have already mentioned for his very full account of the judgment of Paris.³ His work is long, very long ; we may only mention that he kept an open mind as to the moral merit of the Homeric heroes. He blames

¹ Editions by Skeat, 1889, 1893, and 1896.

² Born not later than 1370.

³ *The Auncient Historie and onely trewe Cronicle of the warres betwixte the Grecians and the Troyans . . . wrytten by Daretus, . . . both souldiers and present in all the sayde warres, and digested in Latyn by the lerned Guydo de Columpsis, and sythes translated into englyshe verse by John Lydgate, Moncke of Burye, and newly imprinted, An. MDL.*

Achilles, and blames the chronicler himself for praising Achilles :

‘ A Knight to be in haste so cruell,
Or of hatred so spytefull and so fell.’

As to Helen, his brief characteristic of her at the time of the elopement is not so stern as that of less ecclesiastic writers. He calls her

‘ the fresh and lusty Queen.’

As to Paris, he overflows with his praises, thus :

‘ I mean Paris most passing of beante
That in this worlde no man might se,
In very sothe a more semely knight,

* * * * *

With lockes yelowes like golde is of coloure,
And in shotying most was his delyte,
Hauying in hunting a full great appetyte.

* * * * *

The best archer one that time alive.’

And previously already at the meeting in Cytherea :

‘ Now was Parys of passing great beaute,
Amonge all that euer were alyve.’¹

It remains to give a word to that strange poet and thorough vagabond who has recently been fitted with a heroic and dramatic halo. I mean Villon.² He says in his *Greater Testament*—of course in connection with death :

¹ A selection from the minor poems of Lydgate was edited by J. O. Halliwell (Percy Society, 1841).

² 1431-1461.

‘ Et même Paris ou Hélène,
Quiconque meurt, meurt à douleur ;’

Englished thus :

‘ Paris and Helen though one be,
Who dies in pain and drearihead,
For lack of breath and blood dies he ;
His gall upon his heart is shed.’¹

Caxton² must conclude this chapter, with work not original as literature, but important by the process it inaugurated in England. In 1471 he finished at Cologne, in manuscript, his translation of Raoul Le Fèvre’s *Recuyell of Historyes of Troye*. And then he set about himself printing the book. It is considered one of the first books printed in English and in England, and a copy of it in the Large Room of the British Museum is worthy of inspection. The work has often been reprinted, not without modifications.³

¹ Mr. John Payne’s translation, 1892, p. 32. Hector and Troilus occur in the *Greater Testament*, stanza cxxix.

² Born about 1422.

³ An elaborate edition has been produced in two volumes, quarto, by Dr. H. Oskar Sommer (London, Nutt).

CHAPTER V

FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO GOETHE

THE next great event, as opening a new epoch, is the translation of the *Iliad* into English by George Chapman,¹ thus introducing Homer to his countrymen. Says Keats :

‘ Much have I travell’d in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold ;
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne :
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.’²

Towards the close of the period just rapidly sketched, another account of the Troy story was discovered, though, of course, not at once generally known. In a convent in Lower Italy

¹ Born 1557 or 1559, died 1634 (*National Biography*, vol. x., 1887). The first section of his translation, seven books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, appeared in 1598, and the whole was completed in 1615.

² *Sonnets*, ix., ‘On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer.’

a Cardinal found a manuscript of Quintus Smyrnæus, a Greek writer, probably of the fourth century after Christ, who continues the story beyond Homer, and is of much higher literary value than Dictys and Dares. I have used these *Posthomericæ*, here and there, for instance, as to the Cœnone episode.

Sainte-Beuve has given high praise to this author,¹ who seems to have possessed some of the Cyclic poems. Smyrnæus he was called from his own mention of having at one time lived at Smyrna; Calaber occasionally, from Calabria, the region where the manuscript was discovered, towards the close of the fifteenth century. The first edition of the work, which received the name of *Paralipomena* — i.e., *Derelecta ab Homero libri xiv.*, was printed at Venice in 1505.²

¹ *Étude sur Virgile*, suivie d'une étude sur Quintus de Smyrne, 2^{me} éd., Paris, 1870, pp. 317-426.

‘On conjecture qu’il vivait vers le 4^e siècle, et plusieurs passages de son poème semblent indiquer en effet qu’il écrivit sous les empereurs. Ce poème représente des événements et des traditions d’une haute antiquité et pour lesquels l’auteur a dû suivre des guides et d’autres poètes qui ne nous sont point parvenues. Son sujet est la fin de la guerre de Troie.’

² Other editions followed at rather long intervals: Antwerp, 1539; Basel, 1569; Frankfort, 1614 (*Troja expugnata*); Leyden, 1734. The first translation into a modern language was made by R. Tourlet, 1800. Mr. A.

HANS SACHS.

I hasten to come to the German *Volksbücher* and to Marlowe ; but, as one late sample of the literary period we leave behind us, I propose to turn to Richard Wagner's friend, Hans Sachs, who, as you recollect,

‘ was a shoe-
maker and a poet too,’

and to whom I found a reference the other day in a French book as Jean Sachsius. An exceedingly fertile writer, he composed above 7,000 longer or shorter ‘pieces.’ He lived from 1494 to 1576, and may appear here as a connecting link, closing the romance of the Middle Ages, and as yet free from the dark shadows of magic, witches, and Mephistopheles.

His sources are Dictys and Dares. The poem consequently offers you some new points of view as compared with the Homeric story. Priam's sister Hesione is taken away as a prisoner by the Greeks¹ when they, under Hercules, destroy the

Dyce translated, 1821, three fragments, hardly bearing on the subjects occupying us now. A complete translation of the fourteen cantos into German was made by Donner, the translator of Sophocles, in 1866-1867. A copy in my hands ; none in the British Museum. No complete translation into English seems to exist.

¹ Dares, chap. 3.

city of Troy, which is being built up again by Priam. Paris, in a dream, receives the visit of Mercury and the goddesses, and gives his judgment, in accordance with the promise of Venus. His father sends him into Greece for the purpose of bringing back Hesione. Cassandra tries to dissuade them from this project, but in vain. We are not told that he goes to the Court of Menelaos, but he comes to the island of Cythera,¹ where there is a 'Chapel' of Venus. There he offers sacrifice; and there, too, comes Helena; when she hears that handsome Paris is there, she longs to see him — during the absence of Menelaos. The 'husbands' boat' is not an institution in that classical Ramsgate or Margate! Now, when she, too, offers sacrifice there, they meet, and both are seized by ardent love. Paris, however, dissembles, but he prepares a fleet and arms a power of soldiers. In a dark night Helen is violently abducted. Her people offer resistance, and are defeated with great loss. Paris takes Helen to Tenedos, near Troy, and there comforts her. Priam is glad to hear of the capture; he expects that the Greeks will now, in exchange, give him back his sister. But things fall out otherwise.

¹ 'In Citeram'—now Cerigo, near the south coast of Lacedæmon.

Menelaos comes from Athens with 1,140 ships, and after ten years and a half Troy succumbs by treason—an example of the infinite harm which may come from the love of women, ‘from which may God keep us,’ prays Hans Sachs, the *ungallant*.¹

Hans Sachs is not the only one of the Meister-singers who occupies himself with Helen and the Troy story. Here is (British Museum, 11,521, a 52) *Ein schön maister gesang wie die grosz und machtig stat Troya zerstört ward, durch die schöne kunigin Helena ausz Kriechenlandt*. The author seems to be Lienhart Pack, and the booklet is ‘gedrückt zur Nürnberg durch Jobst Gutknecht, 1521.’ The moral is that princes, lords, and cities are to guard against *Übermut*, lest there befall them the fate that ‘Kayser Menellus’ inflicted on ‘Troy. Also beware of *weibliches Bild*.

¹ ‘Hie merkt man, wie auss Frauenlieb
Oft unendlicher Schad erwachs,
Vor der bhüt uns Gott! wünscht
Hans Sachs.’

‘Anno salutis, 1546, am 23 Tag Martini.’
—*Ausgabe der Bibliothek des literarischen-Vereins*, 1872,
vol. ciii., pp. 150-153.

THE FAUST VOLKSBÜCHER.

If this were an essay, not on Helena, but on Faust, we might have to give a good deal of attention to the *Volksbücher*, a sort of chap-books, which appeared in Germany towards the close of the sixteenth century and later on.¹ But

¹ 1. 1587. Johann Spies, Verleger, Frankfort-on-Main. Oldest edition; author not named. Fourteen reimpressions up to 1592. In 1588 already a rhymed version of the *Faustbuch*.

Karl Engel, in *Zusammenstellung der Faustschriften vom 16 Jahrhundert bis Mitte 1884* (1885), mentions fifteen editions of Spiess' *Faustbuch*.

2. 1592. Also at Frankfort, but without name of printer. N.B.—Marlowe died 1593.

3. Heine interposes, under date 1594, Schottus, on Wagner, claiming to be from the Spanish. (Not known to Schwab.)

4. 1599. Widmann's edition; Hamburg. An extension of the first (1587) edition.

5. The same year. Pfitzer's edition. Likewise an extension of the 1587 one.

6. 1674. Nürnberg. *Der christlich Meinende*, a shortening, in the interest of piety, of the 1587 or first version.

7. At the beginning of the eighteenth century. A new Frankfort edition, the basis of the innumerable reprints of the book retailed at fairs, etc.

Gustav Schwab, in *Die deutschen Volksbücher*, preface, and pp. 443-500. Compare also Karl Simrock: *Faust das Volksbuch und das Puppenspiel, nebst einem Anhang: Ursprung der Faustsage*, 2 Aufl., 1877. This edition contains eighteen pieces more than the oldest (1846), twenty-one more than that of 1852.

this discourse being about Helen, we can rapidly pass by Faust's doubts, his taking up magic, his league with Satan, the great number of his tricks, most of them not reaching to Goethe's scene in Auerbach's *Keller*, and some worse.

The appearance of Helena, however, in these *Volksbücher*, and her connection with magicians even older than Faust, can be traced back to that Simon Magus of Samaria whom we know through the Acts of the Apostles.¹ Irenæus, a Father of the Church in the second century,² relates, in his book *Contra Hæreticos*, that this Simon united himself with a woman called Helena, whom he affirmed to be identical with the Helena who had been the cause of the Trojan War, and whose soul had from that time perpetually been reincarnated.³ 'Having redeemed,' says Irenæus, 'from slavery at Tyre, a city of Phœnicia, a certain woman named Helena, he was in the habit of carrying her about with him.' She seemed originally to have been a sort of angel. 'But,' he continues, 'she suffered all kinds of contumely, and was even shut up in a human body, and for ages passed

¹ Chap. viii., 9-24.

² Bishop of Lyons, 177 A.D. ; died 202 A.D.

³ W.C. Coupland, *The Spirit of Goethe's Faust*, 1855, p. 21.

in succession from one female body to another, as from vessel to vessel. She was, for example, in that Helen on whose account the Trojan War was undertaken.¹

This may dispose of the view that the Helena incident in the Faust legend is a creation of the Age of Renaissance.² More probably the tradition of these repeated emanations lived vaguely on, from the second century to the sixteenth, in the heads of some cloistered monks, and broke out again into the daylight or twilight of the latter period, having long simmered in the brains of these men. And perhaps the fact that one of the group of the inventors of the then young art of printing—an invention fatal to much of monkish industry—bore the name of Fust or Faust, and also of there having been a real Dr. Faustus, may have contributed to stir up again this legend of Helena as the wife of a magician, once called Simon, now Faustus.

Enough: Helena in these *Volksbücher* appears not only as a vision, conjured up by Professor Faust before his students, but she unites herself,

¹ Irenæus *Against Heresies*, book i., chap. 23. Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. v. (Irenæus, translated by Alexander Roberts and W. H. Rombaut).

² Theodor Zahn, *Cyprian von Antiochien*, Erlangen, 1882, pp. 11-13.

in one of these books, bodily with him, and a son is born to them—Justus Faust.¹

After Dr. Faust's gruesome death, when the Devil killed him by twisting his neck, this son, a most handsome young man,² comes to Wagner, Faust's famulus, to bid good-bye to him, saying: 'I go hence: since my father's death my mother cannot bear remaining here; honour you my father's art.'

Then fair Helen enters, takes her son's hand, and both disappear from before Wagner's eyes.

THE PUPPENTHEATER.

At the side of the *Volksbücher* there exists a series of ballads or folk-songs, first collected by Arnim and Brentano in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and recently treated critically by Alexander Tille.³ One of these ballads describes how, when the pact between Faust and Mephisto draws near to its end, they go to Jerusalem, where Faust orders Mephisto to paint the Cruci-

¹ Schwab, *Die deutschen Volksbücher*, p. 484.

² 'Ein bildschöner Mensch,' Schwab, p. 500.

³ A. Tille, *Die deutschen Volkslieder vom Doctor Faust* (Halle, Niemeyer, 1891); and the *Saturday Review*, July 25, 1891.

fixion. The Devil obeys, but will not add the superscription. Rather than write 'Jesus Christ,' he offers to give back the written pact. But, in opposition to the appearance of an exhorting angel, he bethinks himself of calling up Helena. Her Faust cannot resist, and so he perishes.

There also arose out of the *Volksbücher* a kind of popular drama (*Volksschauspiel*), which grew into a sort of marionette play.¹ The popularity of this *Schauspiel* is shown, e.g., by Wieland's reference to *Doctor Faust im Fastnachtspiel*.² The *Puppentheater* flourished all through the eighteenth century, and, with diminished vogue, into the earlier part of the nineteenth. The text of this popular play often varied. It existed in the manuscripts only of the various showmen. Its essence is collected by Simrock,³ and trans-

¹ *Vide* Goethe on the Puppentheater and his occupation with it (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*, book ii.); also *The Faust of the Marionnettes*, an essay by H. C. Macdowell, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, January, 1901.

² 'Wie Doktor Faust im Fastnachtspiel,
Da seine letzte Viertelstunde
Zu Ende läuft, sein schreckliches Ziel
Nun da ist, und zum Höllenschlunde
Ihn unter Blitz und Donnergröhl
Der böse Feind nun holen soll.'

Der deutsche Mercur, 1776, iv., p. 206.

³ *Faust, Das Volksbuch und das Puppenspiel*, 1846.

lated by Mr. Drakeford, a Cambridge man.¹
Here is a sample :

HELEN *appears, silent as usual. FAUST hurries away with her to his house.*

MEPHISTO. Ha, ha, ha, ho ! Now thou art mine, etc.

FAUST *rushes on, with despair in his countenance.*

Curse thee ! curse on thee, malicious, wicked deceiver !
A hellish snake-form I pressed to my bosom. When I
would embrace her, she breathed on me a noisome pestiferous breath : it suffocated me. Is that thy service ?
that thy fidelity ?

But the Devil has the last word, and silent Helena has nothing to say for herself or her lover.

The last performance of the old piece took place so lately as 1844 by Schütz and Dieher's Kasperle Company at Berlin.²

In Klingemann's ³ *Faust* Helena enters immediately before the fatal end of the hero's career, in a long and wild love scene, masked. At the catastrophe she takes off her mask, and appears with a death's head.⁴

¹ *Faust, a Phantasia in Three Acts*, edited by Carl Simrock, and translated into English by D. J. P. Drakeford, Esq., St. Peter's College, Cambridge (London, Bentley, 1847).

² Compare *The Life and Death of Dr. Johannes Faustus*. Mediæval Legends. David Nutt, 1893.

³ 1777-1831.

⁴ Carlyle, in *Miscellanies*, vol. ii., pp. 99-105, gives the essence of the long scenes.

Heine, in his *Faust*, relates his seeing such a play represented by a travelling circus, and gives the conversation of the Doctor with the Devil, who is to bring to the former a beautiful lady. He proposes Judith, but Faust won't have her, because, after loving you, she finishes by cutting off your head. Cleopatra he refuses as being of too expensive habits, but he shows himself ready to accept Helena. 'With her you can talk Greek,' Mephisto insinuates. That settles the matter in favour of Helen.¹

MARLOWE'S 'FAUST.'

Christopher Marlowe's² *Faustus* is built on an early translation of the first of these *Volksbücher*,³ and on the whole is, by its frequent coarseness, scarcely superior to them. It contains, however, a magnificent passage.

Mephisto, complying with Faust's wish, causes Helen to appear bodily. He has before, for the

¹ Heinrich Heine's *Faust, ein Tanzpoem, nebst kuriosen Berichten über Teufel, Hexen, und Dichtkunst* (Hamburg, 1851), p. 73.

² 1563-1593.

³ Compare A. W. Ward's *Old English Plays*, 1878, introduction, liii *et seq.*

satisfaction or delectation of three scholars,
caused the shade to show itself of

‘that peerless dame of Greece,
No otherways for pomp and majesty
Than when Sir Paris crossed the sea with her,
And brought the spoils to rich Dardania.’

Then he admonishes the students to

‘Be silent then, for danger is in words.’

Music sounds, and Helen passes over the stage. The magician himself is silent. But now, when a second appearance is granted by the special favour of Mephisto, Faust, on Helen re-entering, addresses her—she remaining silent—thus :

‘Was this the face that launched a thousand ships¹
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.² (*Kisses her.*)
Her lips suck forth my soul : see, where it flies !—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,

¹ ‘That launched a thousand ships.’ The exact phrase occurs later on in Thomas Heywood’s *Iron Age*. But this time it is spoken by Helen herself (Works, 1874, vol. iii., p. 430). The editor of these works says that the dates of his birth and death are alike unknown. He was a contemporary of Massinger, born 1584, died 1640.

² ‘Immortal by a kiss,’ Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus*, p. 102, book ii., chap. 5. ‘Thus was Teufelsdröckh made immortal by a kiss.’

Instead of Troy, shall Westenberg¹ be sacked ;
 And I will combat with weal Menelaos,
 And wear thy colours on my plumed crest ;
 Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
 And then return to Helen for a kiss.
 Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
 Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars ;
 Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
 When he appeared to hapless Semele ;
 More lovely than the monarch of the sky
 In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms ;
 And none but thou shalt be my paramour.'

Helen continues silent but the stage direction is *Exeunt*, and very soon after Faust's time is up, and, according to contract, the Devil takes him.²

HAMILTON'S 'FAUST.'

About a century, or less, after Marlowe, we find a curious contribution to our literature in Count Anthony Hamilton's³ story, *L'Enchanteur Faustus*, where the shade of Helena is introduced

¹ Wittenberg, Hamlet's University.

² *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*. Edited, with a Preface, Notes, and Glossary, by Israel Gollancz, 1897. Also a recent, somewhat originally got up edition by John Masefield, decorated by Charles Ricketts, 1903 ; and in the 'Mermaid Series,' vol. i., edited by Havelock Ellis, with an Introduction by J. A. Symonds, 1903.

³ 1646-1720. The author or redactor of the famous *Mémoires de Gramont*.

by Faust to Queen Elizabeth of England in the presence of her admirers, Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Essex. These two courtiers, now the one, now the other, show some inclination to admire, but dare not quite, for the Virgin Queen is very sniffy—that seems the correct word under the circumstances.

Elizabeth is not impressed with Helen's beauty. "Je trouve pourtant," dit le comte d'Essex, "qu'elle ne laisse pas d'avoir les yeux assez beaux." "Oui," dit Sydney, "ils sont grands, noblement fendus, noirs et brillants, mais, après tout, ses regards disent-ils quelquechose?" "Pas un mot," répondit le favori.'

Helen, crossing the room, disappears, with a strange smile of conscious triumph. Two other famous beauties—Mariamne, the wife of King Herod, and Cleopatra—are called. Their cold pride offends courtiers and Queen. Then a strange whim makes Elizabeth call for Fair Rosamond, who is not in the original programme offered by Faust to her. The lady beloved by Elizabeth's forebear, King Henry II., unexpectedly charms the Queen. Rosamond having disappeared like the others, Elizabeth requests Faust to recall this beauty. The magician is unwilling. Harm, he fears, will come from so unusual a recall. But the Queen insists, and, on

Rosamond actually reappearing, rushes to embrace her. But an explosion occurs and closes the strange scene. Perhaps we have here the suggestion of the explosion in Goethe's work at the close of the first act of the second *Faust*. What is certain is that he possessed a copy of the book.¹

¹ The story is introduced as an anecdote extracted from the Doctor's 'Unpublished Memoirs' with little alterations, but in all essentials clearly reproducing the French original, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, August, 1822, and reprinted in vol. ii. of *Tales from Blackwood*, pp. 87-102.

CHAPTER VI

GOETHE'S HELENA

THREE times does Helen appear in Goethe's *Faust* ; each time more distinctly, more full of life. The first time in the Witches' Kitchen of the first part. Here Helen's image only is shown in the magic mirror, and is by Faust, in burning words, admired as the perfect form of female beauty. The image, as is fitting for a picture, remains motionless, speechless, perfectly passive.¹

The second time—in the first act of the second part—it is Faust himself who calls forth, by his magic art and by the help of the mysterious goddesses, the Mothers, the shape of Helen, similarly to the accounts of the *Volksbücher*, of Marlowe and of Hamilton. But Paris precedes her. Faust is more than ever entranced ; this beauty surpasses even what was seen by him

¹ It is to this appearance Faust refers in the second part of Goethe's poem, Act I. :

‘ Die Wohlgestalt, die mich dereinst entzückte,
In Zauberspiegelung beglückte,
War nur ein Schaumbild solcher Schöne.’

in the magic mirror. The shadows (if shadows they be) enact a love-scene. Neither speaks. All remains pantomimic. But Helen inclines towards Paris, kisses him ; he lifts her up to take her away in his arms. It is then the rape of Helena which we have before us. Faust forgets his rôle of director of the spectacle. Full of mad jealousy, he tries to interfere. The shadows grow dim. As he touches Paris with his magic key there is an explosion. Faust lies stunned on the ground. The shadows disperse in vapour. Mephisto carries Faust away.¹

In the second act we find them in Faust's old study, where the former famulus Wagner, now Faust's successor in the University, is creating by chemical proceedings a man, or kind of man. We cannot here dwell on that strange Homunculus, the idea of which seems to have originated

¹ On the occasion of a Goethe celebration at Dresden in 1849—the first centenary passed unobserved in the greater part of Germany—there were performed living pictures, among them *Der Raub der Helena, Scenen aus dem zweiten Theile des 'Faust,' von Gutzkow eingerichtet und mit Musik von Reissiger ; der erste Versuch zur Darstellung des zweiten Faust-theils* (Adolf Stern, in the *Goethe-Jahrbuch* for 1901, p. 230).

Since then the whole of the second *Faust*, for a long time considered impossible for the stage, has been represented, not without cuts and modifications, but on the whole perhaps satisfactorily enough, at Hanover, Berlin, Dresden, etc.

with Paracelsus,¹ and was revived in Mrs. Shelley's *Frankenstein*.² He (the Homunculus) and Mephisto and Faust, recovered from his trance, begin their expedition into the Pharsalian fields, where Cæsar and Pompey battled for empire, and into a vast mass of mythological matter, to which Goethe has given the name of the classical *Walpurgisnacht*. This wonderful

¹ 1493-1541. He wrote, *inter alia*, a book, *De generatione rerum naturalium*, in which he gives a circumstantial direction as to the chemical production of Homunculus. Nothing appears on the point in Robert Browning's long poem on Paracelsus, 1835. The Würzburg philosopher Johann Jacob Wagner thought (1811) science would ultimately succeed in creating men by crystallization (Rich. M. Meyer, *Goethe*, Berlin, 1895, p. 526).

See, further, *The Hermetic and Alchemical Writings of Aureolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombast of Hohenheim, called Paracelsus the Great, now for the first time faithfully translated into English, with biography, preface, elucidatory notes, vocabulary and index*, by Arthur Edward Waite, in two vols. Vol. i., *Hermetic Chemistry* (London, Elliot and Co., 1894).

Compare this passage in the chapter 'Concerning the Generation of Natural Things' (pp. 120-128): 'But neither must we by any means forget the generation of homunculi. For there is some truth in this thing. . . . I answer thereto that this is perfectly possible. In order to accomplish it, you must proceed thus . . .' (p. 124).

² 1818, then 1823, and more recently reprinted, under the editorship of Dr. R. Garnett, *Treasure House*, 1891. Observe, however, that Goethe's Homunculus is quite free of the devilish nature of Mrs. Shelley's creation.

pot-pourri wants, with most people, more than one reading, and, for modern readers who are not so drilled in mythology as Goethe and his contemporaries were, requires a rather frequent reference to Lemprière, or some other mythological dictionary, but is not on that account to be sneered at, as Heine did, and Vischer in his third part of *Faust*.¹ However, I do not wish to drag you through this maze.

Enough to say, for the present, that as soon as Faust—who has been carried there, still in a trance, on that magic mantle which we are familiar with through a former adventure—touches the ground, he recovers speech, and his first words are : ‘Where is she?’ Neither of his travelling companions can answer ; they think, however, her abode must be ascertainable, and they separate for the search, going their several ways, with a view to future reunion. Their adventures we need not enter into, especially not those of Homunculus, the scientifically-created man who perishes.

Out of the mass of facts and fancies which surround Faust in his search for Helen, we select but two or three. He meets Chiron, the man-

¹ *Faust. Der Tragödie dritter Theil. Treu im Geiste des zweiten Theiles des goethischen Faust.* 3 Aufl., Tübingen, 1886.

horse, and physician and sage, who has educated Achilles as well as Æsculapius, who knows Hercules, and who rendered help in freeing Helen from Theseus, and was present at the wedding of Peleus, his friend, with the divine Thetis. Chiron, being in a great hurry, cannot stop to listen to Faust, but takes him on his horseback, where Helen herself had found a seat when Chiron carried her on that rescuing expedition, through the marshes of Eleusis. How neatly she jumped down from his back, stroked the wet mane flatteringly, and thanked so prettily, so charmingly, like one conscious of her dignity as a grown-up woman! And yet that old man's joy—she was but seven years old!¹

¹ 'But seven years old' is Faust's interruption in Chiron's tale. But Chiron observes that the poet is not bound by time: 'Gnug, den Poeten bindet keine Zeit' (*Faust II.*).

So also Walter Savage Landor: 'Poets are not bound by chronology' (*Hellenics*) Homer and Laertes.

Larcher, in his Herodotus, is more pedantic or more naïf. He gives this curious chronology:

'Enlèvement d'Hélène par Thésée quand elle avait 10 ans.

'Paris l'enlève 25 ans après (à l'âge de)—25 ans.

'Elle demeurait à Troie avant le siège 9 ou 10 ans.

'Elle avait donc au moment où arrivèrent les Grecs, à peu près 34 ans.

'Le siège dura 10 ans, ce qui lui donnerait au moment où Menelas la reprit, l'âge de 44 ans.

'Il ajoute que le calcul est dans le système de ceux

Faust is in ecstasies on hearing Chiron's tale,¹ seated in the very spot where she sat. He will not, cannot live without gaining her. Chiron takes the wilful one to the goddess Manto, a kind of Sibyl; she is called up from her trance-like dream. She has a mysterious access to the Lower World, whereby in times past she led Orpheus down to reclaim his wife by appealing to the heart of Proserpine (Persephoneia). To her, Chiron, with a good-natured sneer, but helpful, introduces Faust, as a man of maddened brain, seeking Helena, and not knowing how and where to set about it. This is just the sort of undertaking to the taste of Manto, who loves 'him who strives for the Impossible.' Courage, Faust! They descend the dark passage.

If we just mention that in that same night Mephisto has made acquaintance with the three hideous daughters of Phorkys, and borrowed

qui croient que Paris la conduisit à Troie aussitôt après l'enlèvement' (Larcher, vol ii., pp. 415, 416).

¹ As to a celebrated picture, supposed to refer to this incident, *vide* a note on pp. 29, 30. The most recent critic, or *laudator*, of Böcklin gives no explanation as to this particular picture, but says: 'The names of Böcklin's pictures, however appropriate some of them sound, are frequently not given by him, but have had their origin in the Art trade' (Ostini; Böcklin; Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1904).

their repulsive shape, we are sufficiently prepared for the phantasmagory or *Märchen* of Helen, who now, as one having returned from death to life, will be full of both speech and action.

The first traces of Goethe taking for a drama the subject of Helen appear, about the beginning of the century, in his correspondence with Schiller.¹ He then doubted whether he could overcome the difficulty of handling, with freedom, the classical metres, a task which he later on performed in so effective and sonorous a manner. On September 12, 1800, he, speaking to Schiller, says he would be saddened to have to treat Helen as a caricature (*eine Fratze*). He feels so much the beauty in his heroine's position that he thinks a serious tragedy could be built up on what is already begun; still, he shrinks from 'increasing his tasks, whose poor fulfilment, as it is, already eats up the joy of life.' And when he had read a portion of the beginning of the *Helena*

¹ On February 8, 1804, Goethe writes to Schiller about the *Helena* of Euripides, and passingly touches on the attempt of a third writer, not named; it appeared to him that 'the old step, perhaps too heavy for us, of the trimeter was, unaptly, allied with a rhymed chorus.' And yet, perhaps very soon after, he handled the difficult trimeter so splendidly in his own *Helena*. Of course, he gave up the 'unapt' rhyme.

—for it cannot have been anything else—to Schiller, who on September 23, 1800, mentions that the reading had left him a great and noble impression.¹ More than two decades had passed, from these early steps, before the public learns of the slowly ripening thing of beauty. A short article in Goethe's periodical, *Kunst und Alterthum* — then translated into the London *Athenæum*² (by Carlyle), it appears—told us that, from those beginnings, the subject had ‘silently lain in his mind, from time to time exciting him to some progress.’ But whilst hoping to finish the work, he kept the matter ‘a carefully guarded secret.’ We may be sure that among the circumstances which he refers to as ‘exciting him’ was the death of Lord Byron, on April 19, 1824,³ with whom he was united in ties of a mutual warm admiration. It was this event, probably, which induced him to take up the work again, modifying in some degree his plan, and to bring it to an end.

At last, in 1827, the book appeared. Goethe himself called it ‘a smaller drama, complete in itself, but pertaining to the second part of

¹ ‘Mit einem grossen und vornehmen Eindruck.’

² *Athenæum*, 1828 (first year), No. 7, February 12.

³ Later on, Primrose Day, in honour of another man of genius, who departed life on April 19, 1881.

Faust.¹ For an appreciation of the work, which announced itself as a 'Classico-romantic Phantasmagoria' and an 'Interlude to *Faust*,' we are more favourably placed than were readers then. It forms the third act of the second *Faust* drama, which now lies before us complete in its five acts. But you recollect that the publication of that complete drama took place only after Goethe's death, March 23, 1832, and the readers of *Helena* in 1827 were without the passages in the first, and chiefly the second act, which lead up to the beginning of the third, and which I have endeavoured briefly to bring before you.

THE LANDING ON THE COAST OF SPARTA.

Goethe² takes up matters at a definite point in the Troy legend: the landing of Menelaos and the real³ Helena on their return to Sparta,

¹ In the *Kunst und Alterthum* article, Carlyle, *Essays*, i., pp. 42, 43.

² *Ueber die Darstellung der Helena in der Sage und den Schriftwerken der Griechen. Mit Beziehung auf Goethe's Helena. K. Lehrs Aufsätze aus dem Alterthum.* Leipzig, 1856.

In reality very little about Goethe's *Helena*, otherwise interesting enough.

³ 'The real,' in Carlyle's translation of the *Kunst und Alterthum* article (*Essays*, i. 141-143). And in Carlyle's

after long roving. From that moment, however, the legend is abandoned by Goethe, and an entirely new set of circumstances is entered upon. The King, to begin with, is by no means the suave husband; there is nothing like the picture of the *Odyssey*, when Telemachus visits the reconciled couple and finds Helen in the dignified position of the head of the household. Rather does he, at the first mention of him here, remind one of the savage who was with difficulty prevented from ruthlessly cutting down her whom he had covered 'with undesired caresses.'¹ If now no longer violent, he is sullenly authoritative.

Goethe lets Helen land on the coast of Sparta, as seems natural enough. Pausanias (i, 35)

own words: 'Not some hollow phantasm attired in her shape' (like that of the *Volksbücher* and Marlowe), 'while the true daughter of Leda still dwells afar off in the inane kingdom of Dis, and hears not and heeds not the most potent invocations of black art. Another matter it is to call forth the frail fair one in very deed, not in form only; but in soul and life the *same* Helena whom the son of Atreus wedded, and for whose sake Ilion ceased to be. For Faust must behold this wonder, not as she seemed, but as she was; and at his unearthly desire the Past shall become Present; and the antique Time must be re-created, and give back its persons and circumstances, though so long since re-ingulphed in the silence of the blank bygone Eternity' (*ibid.*, p. 143).

¹ In the words of Lewis Morris.

fixes upon another place—at least, in the first instance. ‘The isles,’ he says, ‘which the Athenians possess in the neighbourhood of the continent are, first that of Patroclus, and another, above the promontory of Samnium, which one leaves on the left in navigating towards Attica. Helen disembarked there, it is said, after the taking of Troy, and for this reason the island has taken the name of Helena.’¹ Pausanias gives no further detail, but that Helen was really a historical personage is for him, as for other eminent writers, a matter admitting of no doubt.

PANTHALIS AND THE CHORUS OF TROJAN GIRLS.

Helen is accompanied by Panthalis, whose acquaintance we made in the pictures of Polygnotus,² and by a chorus of Trojan girls, prisoners, now attached in gentle bondage to the Spartan Queen. They at times appear charming, but are by Mephistopheles characterized in a way which reminds us of the crowd of women that accompanied the hosts of Tilly, or of Wallenstein, a ‘war-begotten, fight-bred, feather-headed crew.’³

¹ *Attica*, chap. 35. His book was written *temp.* Hadrian, between 160 and 180 A.D.

² *Supra*, p. 74. ³ *Goethe*, by Carlyle Essays I., p. 149.

Helen, conscious that she is ‘much admired and greatly blamed,’ reviews, in approaching the royal house, her life and its storms, and she is not certain of her future fortune in the old home to which she is brought back :

‘For seldom, in our swift ship, did my husband deign
To look on me ; and word of comfort spake he none.
As if a-brooding mischief, there he silent sat ;
Until, when steered into Eurotas’ bending bay,
The first ships with their prows but kissed the land,
He rose, and said, as if by the voice of gods inspired :
“Here will I that my warriors, troop by troop, disembark ;
I muster them, in battle order, on the ocean strand.
But thou go forward, up Eurotas’ sacred bank,
Guiding the steeds along the flower-besprinkled space,
Till thou arrive on the fair plain where Lacedæmon,
Erewhile a broad fruit-bearing field, has piled its roofs
Amid the mountains, and sends up the smoke of hearths.
Then enter thou the high-towered palace ; call the maids
I left at parting, and the wise old Stewardess :
With her inspect the treasures that thy father left,
And I, in war or peace still adding, have heaped up.
Thou findest all in order standing ; for it is
The prince’s privilege to see, at his return,
Each household item as it was and where it was ;
For of himself the slave hath power to alter nought.”’

THE SACRIFICE ORDERED—THE STEWARDESS.

It appears, moreover, that she is to make preparations for a solemn sacrifice, all the circumstances and requirements of which are indi-

cated, but not the victim. What betokens that omission? However, she enters the palace, and returns, greatly agitated, to her attendants. She has left the door-leaves open, speaks half to herself, half addressing the chorus :

‘ Beseems not that Jove’s daughter shrink with common
fright,
Nor by the brief cold touch of Fear be chilled and
stunned,
Yet the Horror, which, ascending, in the womb of Night,
From deeps of Chaos, rolls itself together many-shaped,
Like glowing clouds, from out the mountain’s fire-throat
In threatening ghastliness, may shake even heroes’ hearts.
So have the Stygian here to-day appointed me
A welcome to my native Mansion, such that fain
From the oft-trod, long-wished-for threshold, like a
guest
That has took leave, I would withdraw my steps for aye.
But no ! Retreated have I to the light, nor shall
Ye farther force me, angry Powers, be who ye may.
New expiations will I use ; then purified,
The blaze of the Hearth may greet the Mistress as the
Lord.’

To her speaks Panthalis :

‘ Discover, noble Queen, to us thy handmaidens,
That wait by thee in love, what misery has befallen ;’

and Helen replies :

‘ What I have seen, ye too with your own eyes shall see,
If Night have not already sucked her Phantom back
To the Abysses of her wonder-bearing breast.
Yet, would ye know this thing, I tell it you in words.
When bent on present duty, yet with anxious thought,

I solemnly set foot in these high royal Halls,
The silent, vacant passages astounded me ;
For tread of hasty footsteps nowhere met the ear,
Nor battle as of busy menial work the eye.
No maid comes forth to me, no Stewardess, such as
Still wont with friendly welcome to salute all guests.
But as, alone advancing, I approach the Hearth,
There, by the ashy remnant of dim outburnt coals,
Sits, crouching on the ground, up-muffled, some huge crone ;
Not as in sleep she sat, but as in drowsy muse.
With ordering voice I bid her rise, nought doubting 'twas
The Stewardess the King, at parting hence, had left.
But heedless, shrunk together, sits she motionless ;
And as I chid, at last outstretched her lean right arm,
As if she beckoned me from hall and hearth away.
I turn indignant from her, and hasten out forthwith
Towards the steps whereon aloft the Thalamos
Adorned rises ; and near by it the Treasure-room ;
When, lo ! the monster starts abruptly from the floor ;
Imperious, barring my advance, displays herself
In haggard stature, hollow bloodshot eye ; a shape
Of hideous strangeness, to perplex all sight and thought.
But I discourse to the air ; for words in vain attempt
To body forth to sight the form that dwells in us.
There see herself ! She ventures forward to the light !
Here we are masters till our Lord and King shall come.
The ghastly births of Night, Apollo, beauty's friend,
Disperses back to their abysses, or subdues.'

PHORKYAS AND THE CHORUS.

Phorkyas has entered from the house, stands between the doorposts. The terror, the indignation, the recollection of former dreadful things

seen by the Trojan chorus break out in short, unrhymed metre, splendid in Goethe, splendid in Carlyle :

‘ Much have I seen, and strange, though the ringlets
Youthful and thick still wave round my temples ;
Terrors a many, war and its horrors
Witnessed I once in Ilium’s night,
When it fell.

‘ Through the clanging, cloud-covered din of
Onrushing warriors, heard I th’ Immortals
Shouting in anger, heard I Bellona’s
Iron-toned voice resound from without
Citywards.

‘ Ah ! the City yet stood, with its
Bulwarks ; Ilion safely yet
Towered : but spreading from house over
House, the flame did begirdle us ;
Sea-like red, loud and billowy ;
Hither, thither, as tempest-floods,
Over the death-circled City.

‘ Flying, saw I, through heat and through
Gloom and glare of that fire-ocean,
Shapes of Gods in their wrathfulness,
Stalking grim, fierce, and terrible,
Giant-high, through the luridly
Flame-dyed dusk of that vapour.

‘ Did I see it ? or was it but
Terror of heart that fashioned
Forms so affrighting ? Know can I
Never : but here that I view this
Horrible Thing with my own eyes,
This of a surety believe I :
Yea, I could clutch ’t in my fingers,
Did not, from Shape so dangerous,
Fear at a distance keep me.

- ‘Which of old Phorkys’
Daughters then art thou ?
For I compare thee to
That generation.
Art thou belike of the Graiæ,
Gray-born, one eye and one tooth
Using alternate,
Child or descendant ?
- ‘Darest thou, Haggard,
Close by such beauty,
’Fore the divine glance of
Phœbus display thee ?
But display as it pleases thee ;
For the Ugly he heedeth not,
As his bright eye yet never did
Look on a shadow.
- ‘But us mortals, alas for it !
Law of Destiny burdens us
With the unspeakable eye-sorrow
Which such a sight, unblessed, detestable,
Doth in lovers of beauty awaken.
- ‘Nay then, hear, since thou shamelessly
Com’st forth fronting us, hear only
Curses, hear all manner of threatenings,
Out of the scornful lips of the happier
That were made by the Deities.’
-

PHORKIAS ANSWERS WITH CONTEMPT.

To this passionate outburst Phorkyas answers
with withering cynicism :

- ‘Old is the saw, but high and true remains its sense,
That Shame and Beauty ne’er, together hand in hand,
Were seen pursue their journey over the earth’s green path.

Deep-rooted dwells an ancient hatred in these two ;
So that wherever, on their way, one haps to meet
The other, each on its adversary turns its back ;
Then hastens forth the faster on its separate road ;
Shame all in sorrow, Beauty pert and light of mood ;
Till the hollow night of Orcus catches it at length,
If age and wrinkles have not tamed it long before.
So you, ye wantons, wafted hither from strange lands,
I find in tumult, like the cranes' hoarse jingling flight,
That over our heads, in long-drawn cloud, sends down
Its creaking gabble, and tempts the silent wanderer that
he look

Aloft at them a moment ; but they go their ways,
And he goes his ; so also will it be with us.
Who then are ye, that here, in Bacchanalian wise,
Like drunk ones, ye dare uproar at this Palace-gate ?
Who then are ye, that at the Stewardess of the King's House
Ye howl, as at the moon the crabbed brood of dogs ?
Think ye 'tis hid from me what manner of thing ye are ?
Ye war-begotten, fight-bred, feather-headed crew !
Lascivious crew, seducing as seduced, that waste,
In rioting, alike the soldier's and the burgher's strength !
Here seeing you gathered, seems as a cicada-swarm
Had lighted, covering the herbage of the fields.
Consumers ye of others' thrift, ye greedy-mouthed
Quick squanderers of fruits men gain by tedious toil ;
Cracked market-ware, stol'n, bought, and bartered troop
of slaves !'

HELEN ACKNOWLEDGED BY PHORKYAS—
MEPHISTO.

But having asserted herself, and poured out
her flood of scorn, Phorkyas proceeds to acknow-
ledge Helen and her position as Queen. In a

rapid dialogue between the two, the leading events of Helen's life are recapitulated, including the Egyptian version—nay, also the union with Achilles, 'from the hollow realm of Shades.' Helen is highly perturbed in mind; the last stroke finishes her. She utters the words,

'To him a Vision, I a Vision joined myself:
It was a dream, the very words may teach us this.
But I am faint, and to myself a Vision grow,'

and sinks in a swoon into the arms of some of the Chorus.

Then follows another slanging match between Phorkyas and the Trojan girls, until Helen recovers from her swoon. Now Phorkyas, speaking respectfully enough to the Queen, brings matters back to the sacrifice which is to be prepared, and strikes almost terror into Helena and the Chorus by divulging the fact that the Queen herself is to be solemnly sacrificed, while the Trojan girls are to be ignominiously hanged—like the maid-servants in the house of Ithaca, when Odysseus returns with Telemachos.

Thus, death appearing inevitable, Phorkyas says:

'She dies a noble death;
Ye, on the high beam within that bears the rafters and
the roof,
As in birding-time so many woodlarks, in a row, shall
sprawl.'

Helen, as well as the Chorus, stands astounded and terror-struck. Phorkyas continues :

‘ Poor spectres ! All like frozen statues there ye stand,
In fright to leave the Day which not belongs to you.
No man or spectre, more than you, is fond to quit
The Upper Light ; yet rescue, respite finds not one :
All know it, all believe it, few delight in it.
Enough, ’tis over with you ! And so let’s to work.’

A RESCUE OFFERED—FAUST.

In this moment of consternation, Phorkyas—we know she is Mephistopheles—wins her game. Subordinate spirits, dwarfs, or devils, are called in, make all preparations for a fatal ending. Despair has seized the Trojans ; they, so perky before, are now cringing. With more dignity, the Greek leader of the Chorus asks to enter into consultation with Phorkyas, whether an issue can be found. Helen herself feels pain, not fear. Resigned to suffer death, she will yet accept rescue thankfully, bearing herself worthily either way. Is there, then, an escape possible ? Yes, Phorkyas offers it. First having established terror, she will appear as a rescuer. She will take Helen to Faust.

Of this Faust Helen knew as yet nothing. Nor does Phorkyas name him, but relates how, whilst anarchy prevailed in Greece, bands of

armed men entered from the North, under a mighty leader who dwells in an inexpugnable stronghold. He might afford protection to the threatened Queen.

Helen utters a question which is, perhaps, characteristic of the all-conquering beauty, and seems to indicate in what sense she may enter on the new adventure, she who inspires love without necessarily feeling it. ‘How looks he?’ she asks. And this is the reply of Phorkyas-Mephisto :

‘Nowise ill ! To me he pleasant looked.
A jocund, gallant, hardy, handsome man it is ;
And rational in speech, as of the Greeks are few.
We call the folk Barbarian ; yet I question much
If one were there so cruel, as at Ilion,
Full many of our best heroes man-devouring were.’

Here Helen may, with a shudder, remember how Menelaos slaughtered Deiphobus, her husband, and the image may stand before her how he was on the point of slaughtering herself, and was with difficulty prevented. Hence the present horrible prospect may unite with the recollections of the past. And she is already near to surrender, when Phorkyas pictures the safety which is to be found in the strong and beautiful castle of the man from the North, barbarian though he be. She entrusts herself to the uncanny guide who will take her thither.

WHAT FAUST REPRESENTS.

Whatever Faust represents in other parts of the great poem—the Striver, the Endeavourer, the Scholar, the Sceptic, the Passionate Lover, the Pessimist, the Altruist, the Human Race, Man—here he represents to us the Middle Ages, the movement of the North eastwards and southwards; and later on, in conjunction with Helen, the Renaissance. And this conception is not so incongruous as it may appear at first, if we think of the Crusades, and more especially of the fourth, when the Christian warriors did not press onward to Jerusalem, but overturned the Greek Empire, and, staying at Constantinople, founded a new one, with numerous feudal dependencies in the old Greek and Byzantine provinces. Faust's kingdom in Achaia is not more improbable than Bohemund's strictly historical principality of Edessa—not to speak of the Danish Prince at Wittenberg, conversing with the players as to representing the story of Troy, or the Moor leading the Venetian troops against the Turks.

Enough: Helen, the much-vexed Queen of Love, Panthalis the faithful, and the Trojan girls who look for dancers at the barbarian Chief's Court, follow Phorkyas, who seems to

take up the office otherwise entrusted to Hermes-Mercury, of Psychopompos, the leader of the souls. They hasten away, a mist rises, they move on in the dark, Phorkyas guiding, behind them the fear of Menelaos; they know not whether their feet touch the ground or they are wafted along. They hear no longer the murmuring waves of the Eurotas, the song of the legendary swans is stilled. They see nothing, when suddenly the mist begins to dissolve,¹ a brown mass rises before them in dim light; they are in front of a wall. One step more, they stand, unheralded, in the castle yard. Phorkyas has disappeared.

¹ 'Auf einmal wird es düster.' The word 'düster,' showing a state between dark and light, is generally conceived as more dark than light. But it must here be understood as more light than dark—lighter than the preceding or surrounding darkness. So in the *Erlkönig*. The darkness of night has before been accentuated, but the child calls the father's attention to the Fairy King's daughters' appearance.

'Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst Du nicht dort
Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort?'

And the father does see something in *a spot, less dark* than the surrounding scenery; he sees it *genau* (clearly), not because the spot is particularly dark, but because it is rather lighter than the general aspect of the surroundings: 'Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau.'

IN FAUST'S CASTLE.

Many tokens of grandeur as well as safety surround them. It is a new world they have stepped into. In the language, too, the poem shows a curious change in the metric atmosphere. The long-drawn, unrhymed Greek verses disappear. Short-rhymed lines take their place.

A long train of pages comes forth, bringing a throne, into which Helen is ushered. She has to preside at what is to follow. From the stairs descends Faust, in the courtly dress of a medieval knight, with many retainers. He greets Helen as his Queen. He brings with him a man in fetters. It is Lynceus, the lynx-eyed, the watchman who did not perceive or mark the approach of the strangers. His excuse is that he looked eastward; but this time a blinding Sun rose from the South. It is the Græco-Roman world shedding its light over the North and the men of the North; it symbolizes the Renaissance. Lynceus is considered guilty, but his master, Faust, will not pronounce judgment. It is now again, as in Goethe's notes to the pictures of Polygnotus,¹ the part of Queen Helen 'to bind or to loosen'; to her the sovereign power is given. She readily pardons

¹ *Vide antea*, p. 77.

Lynceus, who shortly afterwards brings chests full of immense treasures by way of thanks. But this is not enough. Faust recommends him to bring more costly things : is he not the lynx-eyed one who sees deep into the bowels of the earth, where he discovers precious stones and metals ? Surely nothing can be too costly for her. Faust commands :

‘ Go, heap me treasures
On treasures, yet with order : let the blaze
Of pomp unspeakable appear ; the ceilings,
Gem-fretted, shine like skies ; a Paradise
Of lifeless life create. Before her feet
Unfolding quick, let flow’ry carpet roll
Itself from flow’ry carpet, that her step
May light on softness, and her eye meet nought
But splendour blinding only not the Gods ’

—a command which Lynceus is most willing to obey, as being most appropriate to honour such a Queen. For

‘ To a form of such a mould
Sun himself is dull and cold ;
To the richness of that face
What is beauty, what is grace ?
Loveliness we saw or thought ?
All is empty, all is naught.’

HELEN AND FAUST.

The flame of love between Faust and Helena is rising rapidly as they sit together on the high throne. And here occurs a peculiar and pretty

bit of rhyming verse, which has been most happily translated into French by the younger Ampère.¹ Helena has observed in Lynceus' speech a trait which is quite unknown to her. She, like all the ancient world, has never heard rhymed speech before.

'How is it,' she says, 'in this man's speech there is a something so strange, yet so graceful? One sound seems to become married to another, and scarce has a word rung into our ears, when another word comes to caress it. How should one manage to speak so charming a language?'

'That is easy enough,' replies Faust; 'the speech must come from the heart.'

And here let us place Goethe and Ampère side by side :

HELENA.

So sage denn, wie sprech 'ich auch so schön?

FAUST.

Das ist gar leicht, es muss vom Herzen gehn.

HÉLÈNE.

Comment faire pour parler ce beau langage?

FAUST.

Cela est facile, il faut qu'il vienne du cœur.

FAUST.

Und wenn die Brust von Sehnsucht überfließt,
Man sieht sich um und fragt——

¹ Jean Jacques Ampère, 1800-1864, in *Littérature et Voyages*, 2 vols., 1834.

HELENA.

Wer mitgeniesst.

FAUST.

Quand il est inondé des désirs les plus doux,
Il demande quelqu'un——

HÉLÈNE.

Pour jouir avec nous.

FAUST.

Nun schaut der Geist nicht vorwärts, nicht zurück,
Die Gegenwart allein——

HELENA.

Ist unser Glück.

FAUST.

On ne regarde plus en avant, en arrière ;
Dans le moment présent——

HÉLÈNE.

Notre âme est tout entière.

FAUST.

Schatz ist sie, Hochgewinn, Besitz und Pfand ;
Bestätigung, wer gibt sie ?

HELENA.

Meine Hand.

FAUST.

Du bonheur le présent nous ouvre le chemin ;
Mais quel gage répond de l'avenir ?

HÉLÈNE.

Ma main.

So, too, Miss Swanwick's translation is well
worth quoting :

FAUST.

Yet were it best this language to essay ;
Alternate speech invites it, calls it forth.

HELENA.

How thus to speak so sweetly I would know.

FAUST.

'Tis easy : from the heart the words must flow ;
And when with fond desire the bosom yearns,
We look around and ask——

HELEN.

Who with us burns.

FAUST.

The spirit looks nor forward nor behind,
The present only——

HELEN.

There our bliss we find.

FAUST.

Wealth is it, pledge and fortune ; I demand
Who granteth confirmation ?

HELENA.

This—my hand.

And Boito, in that enchanting duet :

ELENA.

O incantesimo ! parla !
Dimmi come farò a parlar
L'idiome suave.

And Paul Milliet :

HÉLÈNE.

Dis-moi qui t'inspire ces sons
Dont j'attends le retour ?

FAUST.

J'interroge mon cœur, il te répond :
L'Amour.

In this connection some words of Madame de Staël may be quoted, by which, in her book *De l'Allemagne*, written in 1810, she, in speaking of rhyme in general, seems¹ to refer to this passage: 'C'est une découverte moderne que la rime; elle tient à tout l'ensemble de nos beaux-arts; et ce serait s'interdire de grands effets que d'y renoncer; elle est l'image de l'espérance et du souvenir. Un son nous fait désirer celui qui doit lui répondre, et quand le second retentit, il nous rappelle celui qui vient de nous échapper.'

That is not quite Goethe's graceful concept, but it comes very near. When Madame de Staël was at Weimar in the winter 1803-1804 no part of *Helena* was printed, but we know by Goethe's correspondence with Schiller that he was occupied with the subject at the turn of the centuries.² Can he have communicated to the sympathetic lady some portion of what he had written or conceived in this direction? It seems most likely.

Rudely enough is the love-dream of Faust and Helena interrupted. 'There is no time for this,' cries Phorkyas-Mephisto, abruptly reappearing, heralding new evil. The trumpets of Menelaos

¹ Deuxième partie: 'De la Littérature et des Arts;' chapitre ix., 'Du style et de la versification.'

² Letters 766 and 767.

are heard ; he is approaching ‘ to storm the castle and avenge his new injuries.’ But nothing daunted, Faust summons his men, who arrive in numerous battalions. We soon lose sight of the Spartan King by the opening of a much larger theatre of war. As Faust addresses his troops by battalions, they rapidly march off in different directions. We gather from his varied speeches that we have got into a new kind of symbolism. It is the victorious fight of the men of the North—their conquest of the South of Europe ; and Faust’s orders to the men and leaders under him become, as it were, the utterance of a common spirit of that great movement which lasted for some centuries, and which the Germans call the *Völkerwanderung*, the migration of nations, whilst with the more or less Romanized other nations it is called the Invasion of the Barbarians and the rise of the Modern Kingdoms. Carlyle admires this long piece of verse. In my humble opinion, it is not one of the happier inspirations of Goethe—scarcely more so than the thick volume of ottava rima in which the modern poet Hermann Lingg¹ relates harmoniously and tamely what Gibbon has told us in undying prose.

¹ *Die Völkerwanderung. Epische Dichtung.* Stuttgart, Cotta, 2 vols., 363 and 270 pp.

EUPHORION.

Faust, however, and Helena, both personally safe, do not follow the troops ; nor is it deemed any longer necessary or fitting for the royal beauty to be encircled by defensive walls. They retire to Arcadia to live an idyllic life. There are lovely groves and inviting grottoes — a favourite place for lovers, in the old world and among imitators of the classical, ever since Calypso's time, though to our modern taste a bit too damp. Phorkyas there attends them. The Chorus lies around, chiefly sleeping. There, in this retreat, a son is born to Faust and Helen.

You remember, from one of the *Volksbücher*,¹ that there was a son of Helen and Faust, called Justus Faust, a handsome young man, who disappeared early, being taken away by his mother when she had to follow his father. And you remember, also, that Achilles and Helen had a son, Euphorion, the nimble, the agile, the graceful. Is, then, Faust, the multiform, now become Achilles? the symbol of fullest virile power united here with the symbol of highest womanly beauty? It seems so.

At first we hear of this child by Phorkyas only

¹ *Antea*, p. 144.

and by what she tells the Chorus. Then the youth Euphorion himself appears. The child has grown rapidly—a marvel. He is bold, hardy, handsome, ‘a Faun in humour, without coarseness’;¹ he bounds ever upward, and on touching the earth again, like Antæus, gains new strength. He appears, after some obfuscation,² anew with a lyre and a radiance about his head. ‘Quitting his boyish gambols, he takes to dancing and romping, and this in a style of tumult which rather dissatisfies Faust.’³ One of the damsels escapes him, flashes up in flame into the air. But shaking off the flame, he mounts higher, on to a peak—*mitten in Pelopsland*⁴—where he catches the sound of war and feels an attraction which makes both the parents anxious. But he sings:

‘And hear ye thunders on the ocean,
And thunders roll from tower and wall;
And host with host, in fierce commotion,

¹ ‘1. Portatu facilis.

2. Qui valde fert, ferax, fecundus.

3. Agilis, expeditus.’

HEDERICUS.

² ‘Doch auf einmal in der Spalte rauher Schlucht ist er verschwunden,
Und nun scheint er uns verloren.’

³ Carlyle.

⁴ In the midst of the land of Pelops = in Greece.

See mixing at the trumpet's call.
And to die in strife
Is the law of life,
That is certain once for all ;'

He repels the warning voices :

‘ Shall I view it, safe and gladly ?
No ! to dare it will I hie.’

A pair of wings folds itself out :

‘ ’Tis my hest to fly !’

‘ He casts himself into the air ; his garments support him for a moment, his head radiates, a train of light follows him.’

Here, then, is Euphorion—Byron glorified. But the ‘ beautiful rushes down at the feet of the parents, you recognise in the dead a well-known form ; yet the bodily part instantly disappears ; the gold crownlet mounts like a comet to the sky ; coat, mantle, and lyre are left lying.’¹

This Euphorion of Goethe was, it seems, to represent or symbolize the rise of a new poesy and art, born from Greek antiquity and the romantic ages. And yet this is, perhaps, not quite convincing. In so far as a personal representation goes, there is no doubt that Goethe

¹ Compare here the last of Lord Byron’s ‘ Occasional Pieces,’ written at Missolonghi, January 22, 1824, his last birthday.

had Lord Byron in mind, with whom he was bound in admiring friendship, and whose then recent death—April 19, 1824, at Missolonghi—seems to have made him alter his plan in that part of the poem. Carlyle could not see that this Euphorion is Byron, rather sneers at those who did see it; but Carlyle ever had some anti-Byronic feeling. Another English critic thinks that not Byron, but rather Goethe himself, should be taken as the child of such union.¹ And a third would like to substitute Shelley for Byron.

Shall we add that some of the verses in that latter part of Goethe's *Helena* are a little stiff and unclear—have a little of that formal stride of limbs stiffened somewhat by age, to which unfavourable critics have given the name of the *Geheimeratstyl*, and which is now and again without that swing, that limpid flow and crystalline form, that characterizes most of Goethe's earlier work and the earlier part of his *Helena* itself? Sometimes, said the Ancients, even the godlike Homer nods a little. Be that as it may, let us listen to Euphorion's last words. They are spoken 'from beneath':

‘ Let me not to realms below
Descend, O Mother, alone !’

¹ Dr. Coupland in *The Spirit of Goethe's Faust*, 1885, p. 272.

The Chorus sing a dirge over the remains, and then, the two parents having expressed that

‘ Joy soon changes to woe,
And mirth to heaviest moan.’

Helena addresses Faust in leave-taking :

‘ A sad old saying proves itself again in me,
Good hap with beauty hath no long abode.
So with Love’s band is Life’s asunder rent :
Lamenting both, I clasp thee in my arms
Once more, and bid thee, painfully, farewell.
Persephoneia, take my boy, and with him me.’

She embraces Faust ; her body melts away ; garment and veil remain in his arms.

Then Phorkyas to Faust, demons appearing, not encouraged by Mephisto :

‘ Hold fast what now alone remains to thee.
That Garment quit not. They are tugging there already,
These demons, at the skirt of it ; would fain
To the Nether Kingdom take it down. Hold fast !
The goddess it is not, whom thou hast lost,
Yet godlike is it. See thou use aright
The priceless high bequest, and soar aloft ;
’Twill lift thee away above the common world,
Far up to Æther, so thou canst endure,¹
We meet again, far, very far from hence.’

Helena’s garments unfold into clouds, encircle Faust, raise him aloft, and float away with him.

Phorkyas-Mephisto then falls into a sarcastic

¹ These words were, perhaps, better translated thus :
‘ So long as life will be granted you.’

speech against minor poets. The Chorus dissolves. Panthalis alone follows Helen into the Nether World, as she would follow her anywhere faithfully, *ora e sempre*. This agrees with Goethe's later ideas on the matter of personal immortality. Only those who have earnestly striven for noble aims, have made of themselves an *entelecheia*, an ennobling completeness, be it by achievement of their own or faithfully devoted attachment, deserve or have a claim to immortality :¹

‘Nur der verdient die Freiheit wie das Leben,
Der täglich sie erobern muss.’

But also :

‘Wer keinen Namen sich erwarb, noch Edles will
Gehört den Elementen an ;²

and

‘Nicht nur Verdienst, auch Treue wahrt uns die Person.’

The Trojan girls, on their part, have no wish to return to the shades with their mistress, nor

¹ Eckermann, March 11, 1828 ; September 1, 1829 ; March 3, 1830. Also Düntzer's edition of Eckermann, vol. ii., p. 266, with reference to Aristotle.

² ‘He only deserves freedom and life who, day by day, has to conquer them’; and ‘He who has not achieved name and fame, nor striven for a noble aim, belongs to the elements merely.’ Also : ‘Not merit achieved only, but faithfulness, too, secures a personal continuance of existence.’

have they a personality to preserve. They disperse—and that is in accordance with Goethe's early pantheism—into outward bodies, leading a but semi-conscious life, or an unconscious one, as Nymphs of Wood and Water. The verses are pretty, but seem an almost needless addition, and their length drags a little, after the pathetic end.

Once more, at the beginning of the next act of the great *Faust* poem, Helen, or rather the cloud, appears, but it is only to shape itself into pictures and at last into dreams of early youth—which, too, rise into the Ether, taking with them what seemed best in his soul. Active life appeals to him, and altruism will claim him.¹

¹ On the Euphorion episode *cf.* also *Ueber die Helena und Euphorion*, pp. 327-355 of Wilhelm Scherer's *Aufsätze über Goethe*, 1886. An early notice, appreciative on the whole, occurs in a letter written from Goettingen, October 21, 1827, by Beddoes, and published by Edmund Gosse in the letters of Thomas Lovell Beddoes, 1894, pp. 148, 149.

EPILOGUE

WE have finished with Goethe's Helena, and nearly and essentially with the whole subject. There are, however, a few other Helenas in literature, though none of them lays such hold of us as do Homer's and Goethe's. Still, let us see what a little aftermath may yield us.

In our days she slightly passes over the scene in Jules Lemaître's charming tale of Briseïs, with its Homeric groundwork. She speaks in the verses and music of Saint-Saëns opera,¹ which, *malgré* Madame Melba's soprano, could not yet hold the stage of Covent Garden, and had but a passing success.

She figures in several plays of Euripides beside the one we have analyzed.² She serves the witty Aristophanes, in one of his outrageous comedies, *The Meeting of the Women*, for an episode, in which he uses the Egyptian version.³

¹ *Hélène: Poème lyrique en un acte.* Paris, Durand, 1904.

² P. 115 *et seq.*

³ *Thesmophoriazusæ*, Act II.

You recollect her passing appearance in Shakespeare. We have met her with that Simon Magus of the Acts of the Apostles, and now, for a long while, she descends to the witches, and becomes a familiar to irreligious conjurers.

Schiller, seeing in Helena's beauty the cause of so much evil, compares to her Mary, Queen of Scots, and lays on the lips of Queen Elizabeth's faithful servant the words (Act I., scene i.):

‘O, Fluch dem Tag, da dieses Landes Küste
Gastfreundlich diese Helena empfang.’

It is Mary Stuart who, like Helen,

‘Mit der Liebesfackel dieses Reich entzündet.’

We come across her, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the published text of a popular English play.¹ *The Siege of Troy* was represented at the Southwark Fair—of which Hogarth, by a remarkable drawing,² has preserved the memory—in 1707, with much pomp, or expense of staging. The anonymous writer is all for Helena. She is throughout—at the ‘Great Booth of Lee and Harper’—a loving wife to Paris, and to him alone. Fair Helen falls with Troy. From a tower she witnesses the

¹ *Vide* p. 142.

² In the Print Room of the British Museum.

EPILOGUE

general massacre and sees Paris killed. Exclaiming,

‘I see what fate does my dear Paris share ;
For him alone was I fair,’

she throws herself from the battlements of the tower into the fire beneath. It is perhaps worth noting that Menelaos comforts himself easily :

‘Tis done, ’tis done, this brace of traitors slain ;
This one night’s joy rewards my ten years’ pain.’

Far into the last century, bits of Caxton maintain a popular existence in little modestly got-up booklets. Thus, *A New History of the Trojan Wars*, published so late as 1845, in Dublin, is in great part identical with a Glasgow chap-book, both echoes of Caxton, going down from Troy to the founding, by Brute, of Troy-Novant, or London. King Albion is conquered, and his brothers, Gog and Magog, are made slaves or serving-men.

A charming instance, too, of the deep reaches into which the story of Troy penetrated may be seen in Izaak Walton.¹ When that worthy

¹ Baring-Gould, *In a Quiet Village* (Isbister, 1900), p. 151 ; and the original Izaak Walton’s *Complete Angler*, chap. 4 (Ephemera’s edition, 1881), p. 97. Or was the reference to Troy in Cornwall ?

Angler, somewhere in the first half of the seventeenth century, meets again the prim Dairy Maid and her mother, he asks her for one of her songs. She does not at once recollect which she has sung to him before, or which he prefers. So she rattles off a list of those she is familiar with. Was it this? Was it that? Was it, perhaps, the song of Troy Town? It would be a far cry from our Helen to a singing Dairy Maid, supposing any such persons to exist in our enlightened age.

Helen has somewhat to say in that curious book *Festus*, by Philip James Bailey, which once had a very great hold on the public, in the middle of last century, and whose existence was well-nigh forgotten at its end, though the author was still among us. Having long outlived his renown, he died, at the age of eighty-seven, on September 7, 1902, at Nottingham, his birth-place. Every edition of this, his chief and almost only work, grew bulkier and bulkier, and the number of readers decreased in inverse ratio.¹ Helen appears late in the piece; she establishes a kind of Court of Love, and is elected Queen. Not much happens: people come, talk, and go. Clara appears to be the

¹ First edition, 1839, large 8vo., 361 pp. ; fourth edition, 1877, vo.8, smaller print, yet enlarged to 688 pp.

principal lady, closely near to Festus. And a new world is to be created in the place of this rather unsatisfactory one, devils of all sizes and of both sexes being duly excluded.

Walter Savage Landor has introduced Helen into his *Hellenics* with great effect. Klingemann¹ has used the poor soul for a love-scene with a ghastly end, as has been already alluded to, and may be read, if need were, in Carlyle. She is absent in Maler Müller's *Faust*, and in Klinger's,² whose book was translated into English by the youthful Borrow, afterwards famous for his *Bible in Spain* and his knowledge of Romany. The author of this rather coarse performance connects Faust with Fust, one of the inventors of printing with movable type, and his work is similar, in this point only, to Heine. Uhland briefly pays due tribute to her beauty in the *Liebesklagen*. In G. W. M. Reynold's *Faust* (1847) she had to stand aside for Lucrezia Borgia.

Helena is absent from Chamisso's *Faust*, from Lenau's long poem, and from Lenz's short *Faust* fragment.³ Nor does Count Soden (1754 to 1831) introduce her into any of his numerous

¹ 1815. Vide Carlyle's essay on 'German Playwrights' (*Miscellanies*, vol. ii., pp. 85-119).

² *Faustus: His Life, Death, and Descent into Hell*. Translated from the German, 1825.

³ Teutsches Museum, 1777, i. 250-256.

plays. In Heinrich von Kleist's beautiful drama of *Penthesilea*¹ she is mentioned but briefly, and Achilles speaks of her with perhaps worse than indifference. Lord Byron found no place for her in his magnificent *Manfred-Faust*, and the few verses on Canova's statue of Helen seem all the mention the great poet granted to the memory of the divine one. Nor—*si parva licet componere magnis*—is she introduced by the Hon. Roden Noel, with his excellent intentions, in his *Modern Faust*.²

She is not present in Berlioz's wonderful *Damnation de Faust*, nor in his *Prise de Troie*, where Cassandra is the principal lady; nor in Schumann's, nor in Spohr's, nor in Gounod's *Faust* opera, though she appears in his ballet (1882), where she rivals Cleopatra, Aspasia, and Laïs, but is conquered for a moment by Phryne till Marguerite appears in a glory.

But she is with us in all her charm in the second part of Boito's *Mefistofele* as a soprano, while Panthalis is a contralto.

¹ *The Penthesilea* was published by Cotta in 1808—curiously, without indication of date. Tieck collected Kleist's works in 1826, and Julian Schmidt's new edition, of them in 1859, produced a great impression.

² London, Kegan Paul and Co., 1888. An attractive memoir of the author is found in the *Humane Review* of January, 1903.

Karl von Holtei, in the generation preceding ours a popular play-writer, has written a *Faust*, introducing a Helena, partly on the ground of the *Volksbuch*. He must have been impressed with the Helena of Goethe's phantasmagory, of which he gives a faint and poor reproduction ; the whole of Goethe's second *Faust* was evidently not known to him.¹

A work of greater value was to be expected from Leopold Schefer, the thoughtful and once highly esteemed author of the *Laienbrevier* (1784-1862). Towards the end of his life he wrote *Der Raub Helena's*, a hexametric poem of considerable length, which is, indeed, so little known that it seemed to escape the research of his careful biographer, Brenning. Did it appear in some German periodical, or *Taschenbuch*, about 1860, or have we only to think of his *Judgment of Paris*?²

¹ Zelter, in his frequent communications with Goethe, spoke unfavourably of the piece. Countess Helena appears first at the Court of Parma, falls violently in love with Faust, wants to go to Troy, is spurned, goes at last into Greek costume and into verse, when Menelaos wishes to take her home. But she intends to get Faust's child from Margaret. Zelter, in the introduction to his correspondence with Goethe, mentions this: *Dr. Johannes Faust: Melodrama in drei Akten*. Now in *Dramatische Werke*, Breslau, 1848.

² Mentioned in note ¹, p. 13.

John Addington Symonds speaks of Helena lovingly in his *Studies of the Greek Poets*. Gladstone, in his *Homeric Studies*,¹ is rather favourable to her, and mentions 'the extreme tenderness of the colouring that Homer has employed in bringing Helen before us.' Paul de St. Victor (1827-1881) has charmingly summed up Helen's character.² Sir Lewis Morris, with a very remarkable searchingness, has probed the heart of her in the *Epic of Hades*. In William Morris's *Earthly Paradise* her name has called forth a striking and pathetic echo. Henry Schliemann, the indefatigable explorer, has felt the magic of Helen. 'In no popular poetry,' says he, 'does any figure exist which represents so fully as Helen the demonic power of beauty.'³ Few among my readers will connect the name of Dr. Kenealy with Helen. He is, if at all, remembered as a lawyer in the unpleasant Tichborne case, and for a very little while with respect to his subsequent short Parliamentary career. He was, however, a poet, and in his very long

¹ *Homeric Studies*, vol. iii., p. 395.

² Alfred de Vigny, it appears, wrote a *Helena*, but I cannot find it in the seven volumes of the *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, 1837-1839, nor in Brussels or Leipzig editions.

³ *Troja*, Dr. Henry Schliemann (London, J. Murray, 1884), p. 162.

dramatic poem, *Goethe*, Helen has a niche as 'a phantom of beauty.'¹

Andrew Lang has given us a fine poem, *Helen of Troy*, with an interesting dissertation.² Such a dissertation, too, was appended by Heinrich Heine to his *Faust*, where he lovingly devotes to Helena a whole act (the third) of his original, though somewhat frivolous, *Tanzpoem*.

It will suffice here to repeat that Goethe's *Helena* play has been enacted, with inevitable cuts, at the theatres of Berlin, Hanover, etc.

Perhaps, in thus descending, we should occupy ourselves for a minute or two with *La Belle Hélène* of Offenbach, the light creation of a departed taste, or untaste. But perhaps I can do something better, I think, by reminding you of the few words in which our newest dramatic poet refers to our heroine. In Act I. of *Ulysses* Mr. Stephen Phillips makes Athena say to Telemachos :

'Up! up! here is thy Troy, thy Helen here!'

¹ E. V. H. Kenealy, *Goethe*, 1863; *Poems and Translations*, 1864; *The Poetical Works of Edward Vaughan Kenealy*, 3 vols., 1875-1879. Both in the second and the third of these works the initial Faust-sketch received considerable extension. In this respect only is the work similar to Bailey's and to Goethe's.

² 1882 and 1883. *Vide* also an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1892, p. 319 *et seq.*

And in the Minstrel's song we listen to the words :

‘ Oh, set the sails, for Troy, for Troy is fallen,
And Helen cometh home.’

And now may I close by venturing to say that Helen has really come home to those who have thus far kindly and patiently followed me ?

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